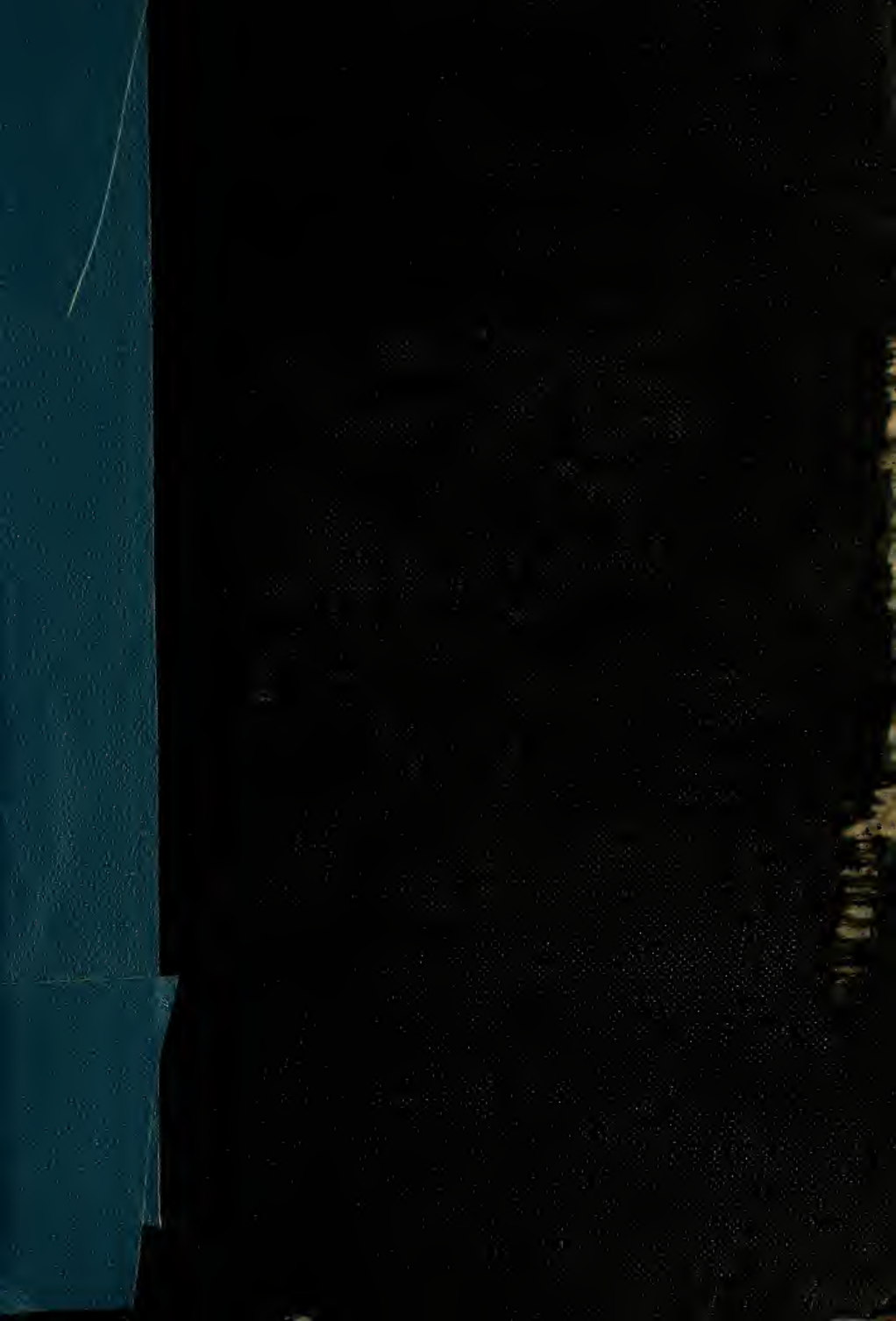

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THE CHICAGO BEARS

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"Papa Bear" George Halas

THE CHICAGO BEARS

By HOWARD ROBERTS

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK

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Manufactured in the United States of America

VAN REES PRESS • NEW YORK

796.33
R644c

HEALTH &
PHYS. ED.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to thank Bears, past and present, for their co-operation; Harry Sheer for help on the war years which I missed in service; George Strickler, former public relations director for the National Football League; and Aubrey Cookman, Jr., for his tremendous fan interest that prodded me into writing the book.

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THE CHICAGO BEARS

CHAPTER 1

AN IDEA TAKES ROOT

THE University of Illinois football team of 1917 was something less than sensational. True, it had beaten Wisconsin and Purdue and had played a scoreless tie with Chicago, which, in those days, was as famed for the toughness of its football players as for the loftiness of its scholastic standards. But the Illini of '17, at best, were undistinguished.

Nevertheless, as he stood before the squad at the annual football banquet at the Urbana-Lincoln Hotel, Coach Bob Zuppke frankly hated to bid the boys good-by. His nasal voice was pitched high in querulous complaint as he warmed up to his speech.

"Why is it," he protested, "that just when my players begin to know something about football after three years—then I lose 'em?"

"Zup" didn't realize it, but with those words he was launching one of the greatest and most enduring gridiron dynasties in sports history—the mighty Chicago Bears. In the two decades since Zuppke inadvertently started it all, the Bears have won more championships than any other professional team; they have made the T formation almost a national institution; they have filled the record books with lasting evidence of their greatness, and they have hitched their golden chariot to a host of stars.

It takes no football astronomer to recount the exploits of such men as Guy Chamberlain, "Paddy" Driscoll, "Hunk" Anderson, Harold "Red" Grange, Bronko Nagurski, Jack Manders, Bill Hewitt, Luke Johnsos, Beattie Feathers, George McAfee, Joe Stydahar, and Sid Luckman. Countless thousands of fans have thrilled to their performances on the

field, many thousands more know them by reputation. Their story is the story of the development of the game itself.

Yet the greatest Bear of all is not included in that list, nor would he claim rank with the world's finest players, albeit he was far above the average. His peculiar talent lay in organization, foresight, and boundless enthusiasm. Out of a perfect blend of those three ingredients he fashioned the National Football League into a dominant position in American sports and made his Bears the dominant team in that league. They call him "Papa Bear." His name is George Stanley Halas.

One blustery December day in 1946 the Bears were en route to Chicago from New York where, the previous afternoon, they had won their seventh world championship. Conversation drifted into discussion of the probable winner of the league's "most valuable player" trophy.

"I know one thing for certain," boomed big Joe Stydahar, veteran of ten years of professional grid wars, "the most valuable Bear is the old man himself—Halas."

"You can say that again," chimed in Ray Bray, barrel-chested 230-pound guard. Shouts of approval rolled and billowed up and down the Pullman aisle so violently that two young women passengers, just entering the car on their way to the diner, turned and fled.

"We didn't have the best personnel in the league, not by a long way," Stydahar analyzed. "But George made us into a winning unit. He drove us to a title on psychology and enthusiasm. We won on spirit. The old Bear spirit!"

The Halas touch has made Bear teams greater than they normally should be ever since he organized the club back in 1920. It has wrought beneficial changes in the rules of football. It has in a sense made a silk purse out of a sow's ear, for it has brought professional football from a position of comparative disrepute among the nation's sports into its present prominence, respect, esteem, and popular acclaim.

It was into the alert mind of a youthful Halas that

Zuppke's fateful words struck with the impact and permanence of a harpoon. He pondered them long after the banquet had adjourned.

"By golly," he mused, employing his favorite and, save in times of stress on the field, his strongest expression, "by golly, he's right. Take my own case. Here I am just reaching my peak as a football player, and I'm through. Now it doesn't make right good sense that a man should have to quit in his prime. I'd still like to play football, and I'll bet I'd get better with another season or two under my belt."

If he felt this way, Halas reasoned, so must the other boys. Now if they could only get together and form a team . . .

But several years were to elapse before those dreams could blossom into realization.

First of all, there was a war going on, so George joined the Navy, emerging at the end of hostilities as an ensign. While in training at Great Lakes, however, he once more had an opportunity to exercise his boundless enthusiasm for football.

That exuberance is graphically illustrated by an episode that transpired back in 1916. Illinois was a hopeless underdog in the annual game with Minnesota, especially inasmuch as its star end, George Halas, was on crutches with a severe leg injury. The game was played in Minneapolis, but Halas was permitted to make the trip with the team and sit on the bench with the rest of the players.

In one of the Western Conference's biggest upsets Illinois made two surprise touchdowns and hung on grimly while the mammoth and desperate Gophers tried to catch up. Minnesota never quite made it, and Illinois won, 14 to 9.

The bang of the gun ending the game was echoed by the pandemonium that centered on the Illinois bench. Players leaped to their feet, tossing blankets, headgears—everything they could lay hand to—into the air. Highest of all went the crutches of George Halas as he sprang forward to lead the rush to shake the hands of the triumphant team.

Panic-stricken trainers raced out to remind George that he

was a cripple. He brushed them aside and laughed. All this brought on a relapse, of course, but that didn't matter. Hadn't Illinois won?

That's the spirit he took to Great Lakes, where he found himself a member of one of the finest football squads ever to represent a branch of the service and the only noncollegiate eastern team to play in the Rose Bowl. On January 1, 1919, Great Lakes defeated the Mare Island Marines in the annual festival classic at Pasadena, California.

Many of Halas' teammates from that sailor squad were to go along with him later to brilliance in the pioneer days of professional football. Two of them—John L. "Paddy" Driscoll and Jimmy Conzelman—are today, respectively, a trusted coaching assistant and a bitter coaching rival.

Halas' athletic talents weren't confined to the gridiron, and following his release from the Navy, he signed with the New York Yankees, whose scouts considered him major league baseball timber despite the fact that he had no minor league experience. He joined them for spring training in 1919 and went about winning a job with typical enthusiasm, but this time his drive and hustle served merely to turn his steps back to football.

Rube Marquard, the great southpaw who set the major league record of nineteen consecutive victories, was pitching against the Yanks in an exhibition game, and Halas, at bat, was intent on two things. He wanted to impress Miller Huggins, the mite manager, and to silence Rube's taunts about a "fresh rookie"—himself. George swung viciously at a fast ball and sent a line drive skipping between the outfielders. Around first base he sped, around second, and into third with a crashing slide and a triple!

It was a costly hit, for on the slide Halas injured his hip so severely he never again was a top-flight baseball prospect, losing the fine edge of his speed. Huggins later said the mishap wrecked "one of the best outfield prospects I ever saw." It also proved the making of professional football.

George appeared in the Yankees' opening game of 1919 and made two hits against the Athletics, but he began to slow up perceptibly in the field, and after two months he was sent to "Bonesetter" Reese at Youngstown, Ohio, for treatment from the man with the magic touch for muscle injuries. "Bonesetter" kneaded the pain from his hip so effectively he soon was able to report to the St. Paul club.

Mike Kelly, the Saints' manager, at once took a liking to the youngster because of his flaming competitive spirit, which found expression in a couple of violent flare-ups against umpires. He wanted Halas to remain with the club in 1920, but George insisted he couldn't afford to play unless he were paid at the same terms for which he had signed with the Yankees. Kelly would gladly have paid the salary on the chance of selling him to a major league club later at a profit, but the Yankees refused to relinquish their claim.

"Actually," Halas confesses now, "I never really thought I had the makings of a major league baseball player. Besides, I still had this football idea fixed in the back of my mind. I wanted to give it a whirl, some way, sometime."

Indeed, he managed to play a few games of football during the fall of 1919 with an independent team at Hammond, Indiana. There were many such teams in those days, most of them in smaller communities, but they weren't organized into a league. Teams simply sprang up and played whatever opposition was available. The play-for-pay sport flourished especially in Ohio and Pennsylvania near its birthplace—Latrobe, Pennsylvania. The first professional game was played at Latrobe on August 31, 1895, between a team sponsored by the Y. M. C. A. and one representing Jeanette, Pennsylvania.

While he was arguing salary with Mike Kelly and St. Paul, Halas simultaneously was in communication with A. E. Staley, owner of a corn products company in Decatur, Illinois, and the firm's general superintendent, George E. Chamberlain. The Staley Company operated a strong semipro baseball team managed by Joe "Iron Man" McGinnity, and

it had met with such popular acclaim that Mr. Staley planned to enlarge the company's athletic program. He approached Halas with an offer to become supervisor of the entire program, to play on the baseball team, and to organize a football team to represent the Staleys that fall.

It was the mention of football that was the clincher. Here at last was a chance to put his great idea to work. So Halas turned his back on baseball, his face toward unlimited horizons, and went to work for Mr. Staley.

That was a busy spring and summer for George Halas. In the starch works he was shuttled from department to department, learning the business from all angles. He played baseball for the plant team and managed to maintain a batting average of better than .300 despite such distractions as supervision of other plant athletics and a complete circuit of Middle Western colleges, lining up players for the Staley football team. His inducements to graduating stars included employment with the Staley organization plus an equal division of such profits as the football team might show in its first year of being.

The fruits of the talent hunt he conducted in conjunction with George Chamberlain are summarized thus in the *Staley Fellowship Journal*'s "picnic number" of 1920:

> Here are the men whom we will depend upon to take the measure of some of the great teams in the central west this season: Walter Pearce, formerly quarterback with Pennsylvania U., Dutch Sternaman, Illinois U. star and the man who scored the touchdown against Ohio State when Zuppke's eleven won the 1919 Big Ten title at Columbus. Bob Koehler, formerly fullback and captain at Northwestern U. and the strong Municipal Pier eleven of Chicago. Jake Lanum, former Millikin and Illinois U. halfback. . . . Kyle McWherter . . . Leo Johnson . . . Charley Dressen. . . . In the line there is George Halas, old Illinois star and later with Great Lakes and Hammond.

. . . Jerry Jones . . . Hugh Blacklock . . . Burt Ingwersen . . . George Petty . . . George Trafton.

Study that list of names again and note how many still are active in big-time athletics. Charley Dressen, a fast little quarterback, is the same Dressen who managed the Cincinnati Reds, was Leo Durocher's right-hand man with the rambunctious Brooklyn Dodgers, and who now is coach of the New York Yankees' baseball team. Leo Johnson is track coach at Illinois and developer of champions; Burt Ingwersen has had a long and successful collegiate coaching career and developed the powerful line that gave Illinois its Big Nine and Rose Bowl laurels; George Trafton, now assistant coach of the Los Angeles Rams, has been in the competitive and business ends of several sports.

The greatest of the players to perform under the Staley banner that fall is not included in this list, however. He was Guy Chamberlain. Halas classes Chamberlain and a later Bear star, Bill Hewitt, as the two finest ends ever to trot onto a gridiron. Chamberlain, an All-American at Nebraska, was a giant, standing six feet, two inches, and weighing 205 pounds. Tremendously fast, he was used as a ball carrier on end-around plays as was his counterpart, Hewitt. He played for Halas only two seasons but left an impression more lasting than any footprint stamped by a movie star in the concrete of a Hollywood theater lobby.

Now that Halas had a team, it was essential that there be a league in which it could play. Such an organization came into being on September 17, 1920, at Canton, Ohio, and George had a hand in its founding.

The birth of what is now the National Football League took place in the automobile agency of Ralph Hay, owner of the Canton club, and in perhaps the most informal meeting on record. There was no sumptuously furnished hotel suite, no gleaming conference table, no formal elegance to this historic gathering. The founders lounged around Hay's sales-

room, perched on running boards or leaning against fenders. A few lucky ones sat in chairs.

From this friendly hodgepodge emerged the American Professional Football Association with Jim Thorpe of Canton as president, Stan Cofall of Massillon as vice-president, and A. F. Ranney of Akron as secretary-treasurer. The following clubs were granted memberships:

Canton Bulldogs, Cleveland Indians, Dayton Triangles, Akron Professionals, Massillon Tigers; Rochester, New York; Rock Island, Illinois; Muncie, Indiana; Hammond, Indiana; Chicago Cardinals, and Staleys of Decatur, Illinois.

The membership fee was set at $100, but the primary requirement even more than the cash was attendance at the meeting and assurance that a team would be put on the field. Twenty years later a membership fee was $50,000, and an actual franchise was worth many times that figure.

Halas had no difficulty convincing the other coaches he had a team to put on the field. Indeed, eyebrows rose to lorgnette height when he revealed the names of his players. The lifted brows merely reflected the feelings expressed in the *Staley Journal,* which said: "It looks like the best bit of material ever gathered for a team in this state, and while the fellows will meet some of the greatest machines in the country, they are expected to hold their own with the best of them."

They did, too. Their only defeat, a 7-to-6 one by Chris O'Brien's Chicago Cardinals, was avenged four days later by 10 to 0. At the end of the year each player pocketed $1,900.

An era had dawned.

CHAPTER 2

MOVE TO CHICAGO

THE year 1921 brought a mild financial panic that took a bit of starch out of the Staley Company. Mr. Staley valued his football team and was inordinately proud of it, but his business came before his hobby, and he couldn't see how he could well afford to finance the club through the 1921 season. Consequently he gave Halas permission to move the team to Chicago but with the provision the name "Staleys" be retained for a year. For this privilege he advanced $5,000 toward expenses.

Thus Mr. Staley lost his ball club, but he never lost interest in it. As long as he was physically able, he would go to Chicago whenever possible to see it play. Afterward for many years he followed the games by radio.

The idea of operating a football club in the country's second largest city seemed a mite frightening to a young athlete still in his early twenties. As coach, player, and business manager, Halas already was swamped with work, and the more he thought of the Chicago deal the more convinced he became that it was too big to swing alone. He needed a partner.

"Besides," he reasoned, "if I take in one of my players as a partner, that will be one less salary to pay every week!"

The player he selected was his old friend from Illinois, Edward "Dutch" Sternaman. Together they hastened to Chicago and to the offices of the Cubs' baseball team, where they sought out William Veeck, the general manager. Veeck, a former sports writer, was blessed with an acute sense of values in things athletic. This, together with a violent flair for spectacular showmanship, he passed on to his son, Bill, Jr., color-

ful president of the Cleveland Indians. Veeck *père* enjoyed football; he believed Chicago had plenty of football fans who, because of the demands of their jobs or inability to obtain tickets, were unable to attend college games and so would welcome a Sunday grid attraction. He also saw an opportunity to collect rental for an otherwise idle ball park, money the Cub treasury could use to advantage. Consequently, he and the enthusiastic new magnates had little difficulty reaching satisfactory terms.

The Staleys, it was agreed, would play all their major games at Wrigley Field on a gridiron running east and west along the first-base line instead of north and south as the field now is laid out. The Staleys were to pay 15 per cent of the gross as rental and would keep the proceeds from program sales. All other concessions were to be retained by the Cubs.

These details arranged, Halas and Sternaman set about looking for means of strengthening their football team in an effort to make it an attraction worthy of its new home. The most highly publicized Middle Western stars of the previous college season were members of the Ohio State team, which took a surprising 28-to-0 beating in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day, 1921—the last time, incidentally, that a Western Conference representative played in Pasadena until 1947 when an underdog Illinois team gained revenge with a thumping 45-to-14 conquest of the Pacific Coast's champion U. C. L. A.

Three of the greatest of these Buckeye stars soon were signed to Staley contracts. They were "Chick" Harley and Pete Stinchcomb, both of whom won All-American rating as backs, and an aggressive little guard christened John L. Taylor but known simply and understandably as "Tarzan." Halas corralled them through a deal with Bill Harley that guaranteed a percentage of the proceeds to his brother Chick. Bill Harley later contended the transaction gave him an interest in the ball club, but the courts decided against him.

The Ohio trio discovered professional football to be vastly different from the collegiate brand, but they were sharp factors in bringing the championship of the American Football Association to the Staleys that fall, the club completing the season with a record of ten victories, one defeat, and a tie. Halas' star was in the ascendancy; his domination of pro football had begun.

"Those were rugged days," Taylor recalls, "especially for the linemen. If you didn't play the entire sixty minutes, you were considered a sissy. Why, for part of that '21 season we operated with only one substitute lineman. He was Lou Usher, All-American from Syracuse, and he played every position in the line."

In these pioneer days the dressing room between halves was an even more dangerous place than the gridiron itself. "If you played a bad first half, it wasn't safe for you to come into the clubhouse," Taylor continues. "You'd be berated as a yellow so-and-so and take such a verbal beating you'd go out for the second half all fired up. I missed a tackle one day, and as soon as I stuck my head inside the dressing-room door, the boys began leveling on me. 'So you were a star on that great Ohio State team, huh? Why, you bum, what do you know about football? No wonder Ohio blew the Rose Bowl game!' "

The Staleys opened the season with a 25-to-0 victory over Waukegan, then met the Rock Island Independents at Decatur in the team's farewell appearance on its home field. It began to assume the aspects of a sad adieu when Jim Conzelman, a member of the Staleys in their formative year, ran for a touchdown and kicked a field goal to give the Independents a 10-to-0 lead at half time. The deficit, however, served chiefly to ignite one of those clubhouse flare-ups.

Taylor, still imbued with the old college try, thrust out his jaw and looked up into the face of the giant Trafton. "Why," he demanded of the big center, "don't you learn how to hit

'em? I thought this was a tough league. Let's flatten a couple of those guys!"

Trafton grinned and shook his head. "Watch yourself," he advised, in what was probably the shortest speech of his career.

The third period began, and "Tarzan" wasted little time in convincing Rock Island he was a toughie. He leveled a vengeful fist at an opposing lineman and knocked him cold, being lucky enough to escape detection by the officials.

"See what I mean?" he chortled at Trafton as they lined up for the next play.

"Watch yourself," George advised a second time, putting added emphasis into the words.

The next play was a sweep around left end. The runner went almost to the side line and cut back to mid-field before being downed. The teams lined up again, but before the ball could be snapped, Trafton called for time out.

"Wait a minute," he shouted. "We've only got ten men!" A quick count revealed that Taylor was missing.

"We found him over near the far side line," Trafton chuckles. "He was buried so deep in the dirt we had to excavate. His nose was flat as a pancake, and he was mumbling something about how pretty the scenery was at the Rose Bowl!"

"It wasn't that bad," Taylor confesses, fingering the bridge of his nose gingerly, "but I had learned a lesson."

"Tarzan's" damaged schnozzola didn't play too active a part in what transpired later, but the Staleys charged on to two touchdowns and a 14-to-10 triumph.

Conzelman's role in this game was distressing in the extreme to the Staleys, but twelve months earlier he rendered them a great service in helping to launch Andrew David Lotshaw on his fabulous career as a trainer, rubber, raconteur, and hilarious jouster with polysyllabic words.

Lotshaw, a big, amiable, rawboned millwright called "Windy," was playing first base for the Staley nine of 1920.

A veteran minor leaguer, he could hit a baseball a mile on occasion but was something less than a gazelle on the field. Of football he knew nothing save that the ball was inflated with the stuff that gave him his nickname. Nevertheless, he hung around the practice gridiron and the clubhouse, eager to be of service and as friendly as a Saint Bernard pup.

Wee Willie McGill, who had trained the baseball team, quit one afternoon after a salary dispute, leaving the football players without anyone to rub sore muscles, wrap ankles, or minister to their physical needs. Lotshaw, his alert ear cocked for opportunity's knock, sprinted up to Halas and George Chamberlain almost before Wee Willie had put his resignation into words.

"Is there anything I can do?" Andy asked.

He knew nothing about athletic injuries other than some baseball spike cuts he had suffered and promptly disinfected with a squirt of tobacco juice, but he was willing and industrious, and Halas was desperate, so he was put to work.

Conzelman, now coach of the Chicago Cardinals and in constant demand as a banquet orator, offered to show Andy how to apply bandages and tape an ankle. All afternoon he gallantly served as a guinea pig while Lotshaw wrapped him in tape, ripped it off, and rewrapped endlessly. At the cost of all the hair from the Conzelman legs, the new trainer mastered the first rudiments of his trade. He made a great show of learning and even went so far as to buy a library of medical books.

"Some of the boys had their doubts whether he could read them," says Halas, "but his enthusiasm impressed everyone, and he sure talked a great game."

Andy took his bandages and tape home and continued his self-training with the help of his wife, who served as his model so often she was wrapped like a mummy most of the time.

"For years every time she'd see a roll of adhesive tape she'd run and hide," Andy declares.

Actually Laura and Andy Lotshaw held the Staleys together—and their uniforms, too, washing, sewing, repairing so that the team looked clean and snappy each time it took the field.

The next summer Andy gave up his baseball career and donned an umpire's mask and protector, forthwith giving a demonstration of tact and foresight that proved him eminently qualified for the role of arbiter. He was umpiring behind the plate in a game in which the Staleys were losing, 1 to 0, to Lincoln, Illinois. Two men were on base, two were out in the ninth inning, and Halas was at bat. The count was three balls and two strikes.

"I never was much good against a sharp curve," Halas admits, "and the pitcher knew it. He broke off a dandy, smack over the heart of the plate for as perfect a strike as I ever saw."

Lotshaw, however, was not one to throw down his autumnal boss in a pinch, especially with another football season looming ahead. "Ball four!" he bellowed, and with a dramatic sweep of his arm that brushed aside all argument, "Take your base!"

The next batter singled to center, two runs trotted home, and the Staleys won, 2 to 1.

Andy Lotshaw's job was secure.

He served as trainer for the Staleys in 1921 and has been with the Bears ever since. His unflagging spirit, pep, and devotion to duty so captivated Bill Veeck, Sr., when the two came into contact, that in '22 he was named trainer of the Cubs. For a quarter of a century he has ruled over the Wrigley Field clubhouse and to this day puts as much effort and conversation into the job as he did when he made up his mind to learn the unique business and started slapping tape on Conzelman's shanks.

One week after their triumph over Rock Island the Staleys made their Chicago debut. Eight thousand spectators, lured by curiosity and the All-American flavor of the Staley line-up,

sat in the stands and liked what they saw as the Halasmen rallied from a 10-point deficit to defeat Rochester, 16 to 13.

The newspapers, although still somewhat skeptical of the future of the professional game, gave it a kindly reception, the two morning papers devoting roughly a half column of type, including line-ups, to the game. Of course, the sports editors did not dignify the game by assigning staff reporters to cover it, being content to use verbatim, or rewrite slightly, a "handout" yarn written by a press agent and distributed by Halas and Sternaman personally to each paper. One morning and one afternoon paper even permitted the press agent's boner to creep into print. It read: "Huffine shot a 35-yard forward to Stinchcomb, who was stopped on the Rochester 85-yard line."

Now that the Staleys were essentially a Chicago enterprise, Chicago became their home. The players established residence at a north-side hotel not far from Wrigley Field, where practices were scheduled each morning.

"We had a definite purpose in calling morning practice," says Halas. "After all, this is a big city filled with varied attractions for a husky young athlete. We figured if a player had to report for morning practice he couldn't do too much playing of a different sort at night."

This reasoning, Halas discovered many times, was not 100-per-cent accurate. In later years training rules became rigid, exact things, but no matter how much these hardy pioneers strayed from the routine, they always were ready for sixty bruising minutes on Sunday.

"We had only sixteen men on the roster," says Halas, "and barring injuries, even that was too many. Everyone wanted to play the whole game. Why, I'd risk my life every time I'd take someone out."

Salaries varied from $75 to $100 per man per game, a far cry from the $15,000–$20,000 yearly now paid some of the outstanding offensive stars. Games frequently were postponed or canceled because of rain, snow, or mud, so that the

weatherman could give the players a solid and painful kick in the pocketbook if he was in the mood. The Staleys of '21, moaning over the loss of one week's pay because of rain, trotted out on the field the following Sunday to find an abnormally large crowd in the stands. Thereupon was born a miniature and spontaneous strike. A majority of the players refused to line up for the kickoff unless promised full salary for the rained-out Sunday as well. Halas and Sternaman then made everyone happy by promising all hands a full salary for the rained-out Sunday if they could win the championship. The team then went out to celebrate with a victory.

Indeed, the Staleys tasted nothing but victory until November 15 when they met the Buffalo All Stars, likewise undefeated but twice tied, in a game billed for the championship. The Chicago crowd sensed an easy triumph when Ken Huffine passed twenty-five yards to Coach Halas, and a few plays later, "Dutch" Sternaman sliced five yards off left tackle for a touchdown. No one worried too much when Sternaman's toe, usually as dependable as the mint, failed on the try for extra point. The miss turned out to be the ball game, however, for early in the third period Tommy Hughitt, the old Michigan hero and later a National Football League official, hurled a long pass to Kuehle for forty yards and a touchdown. Hughitt kicked the extra point, and Buffalo won, 7 to 6.

Schedules weren't the hard and fast, prearranged affairs they are in this day of regimentation, games being carded solely with an eye to convenience and gate receipts. Consequently the Staleys began clamoring for revenge. A return game was arranged a fortnight later, but meanwhile the Staleys defeated Green Bay, 20 to 0, in the inaugural of what was to become one of professional football's most bitter series.

That Green Bay game was notable for one thing—it brought a blush to the cheeks of "Tarzan" Taylor for perhaps the first and last time. Tarz, still eager to convince the world that a little man could be as tough as a big one,

whipped a sly fist to the nose of Howard "Cub" Buck, an immense tackle recently voted by the citizens of Green Bay as an all-time Packer grid great. Buck, his nose broken, kept a tight rein on his temper. He didn't punch back. Instead he stood placidly near mid-field where all eyes were focused on him, and looked sadly down on the much smaller Taylor.

"You're supposed to be a college graduate and a gentleman, you know," he said softly.

"I never felt so cheap in my life," Taylor recalls. "My face got so red it's a wonder my shoulder pads didn't catch fire."

Eleven of the twenty-two men in the starting line-ups of that second Staley-Buffalo game had been picked by Walter Camp on his All-America selections, but the star of stars that chilly afternoon was the Staleys' Guy Chamberlain.

The former Nebraska end intercepted a pass in the early moments of the game and ran seventy yards for a touchdown. "Dutch" Sternaman made good his kick this time and also added a twenty-yard field goal later to make the final score 10 to 7. The Buffalo touchdown came when "Swede" Youngstrom blocked a punt by Huffine, and "Steamer" Horning fell on the ball in the end zone. Youngstrom, a powerful guard who won All-America honors at Dartmouth, made a habit of blocking punts. He blocked eleven in 1919 and nine the following year.

Chamberlain's long run gave the Staleys the crown and was the start of a personal career of championships, although it was his last bit of heroics under the Halas banner.

In 1922 Guy went to Canton as coach and led the Bulldogs through two undefeated championship seasons. He won another championship with almost the same team for Cleveland in 1924, moved to Frankford in '25, and gave that club a championship in '26. He accomplished that feat by beating the Bears—but more of that later.

Chamberlain's coaching achievement of four championships in five years with three different teams is a football epic, but thereafter he dropped out of the game.

The triumph over Buffalo was the one that nailed the first football pennant to the Wrigley Field flagpole, but there remained another title to settle—that of the City of Chicago, whose older pro eleven, the Cardinals, had been clamoring all season for a game.

Immediately after the Staleys lost the first engagement with Buffalo, Chris O'Brien, the Cardinals' boss, emitted a loud wail. "We've been trying to get a game all year with the Staleys," he protested through the news columns. "We gave them a game the first of last season and won, seven to six. Then we gave them a return game. Paddy Driscoll was out of that one and the Staleys beat us, ten to nothing."

The city championship clash finally was agreed upon, and contracts were signed on the morning of December 14. The Cards announced they would endeavor to strengthen their line-up by acquiring new talent from other teams whose seasons were over, but the Staleys vowed to stand pat on the group that had fared so well all year.

Both teams were doomed to disappointment, however, for the city champion for 1921 never was determined. In bitter cold and on a field covered with snow the shivering athletes skidded to a scoreless tie. There were four scoring opportunities. Driscoll missed a thirty-five-yard drop kick attempt and Arnold Horween of Harvard, who with his brother played under the name of McMahon, missed two place kicks for the Cards. The Staleys gained possession of the ball on a third-period fumble on the Cardinal twenty yard line, but lost it again on an incomplete fourth-down pass. Driscoll's punting kept the ball in Staley territory most of the afternoon and implanted in Halas' mind the notion that Paddy would look much better to him if he were to wear the same uniform. The idea didn't bear fruit until 1926.

CHAPTER 3

THE BEARS ARE BORN

THE year 1921 had been history only a month when it was resurrected so violently that professional football gained its first eight-column newspaper banner headline. With this fanfare began a year of "firsts" for the sport, among them the renaming of the Staleys as the Chicago Bears; transfer of the Green Bay franchise to Earl L. "Curly" Lambeau, who has coached the Packers through an unbroken span ever since; the debut of the National Football League on June 24; and the first player deal in the sport's history—this, too, involving the Bears.

The headline appeared in the now defunct Chicago *Herald-Examiner* on January 30. It read: "Stagg Says Conference Will Break Professional Football Menace."

The story quoted Amos Alonzo Stagg, venerable coach of the University of Chicago in the years when it had football teams and good ones, as follows: "The directors of the Conference teams will meet in March. I happen to be their president this year, and I shall bring the menace of the professional game before them. Heretofore the various coaches have been trying in their own way to fight the evil. I think the time for concerted action is at hand. I have noted the danger for several years as the professional game grew, and I have been on the *qui vive* to meet it."

Stagg's blast against the pro sport echoed the sentiment of the majority of Western Conference athletic officials, but George Huff, athletic director at the University of Illinois, could see no reason for a war between college and professional football. "Football is a great game, and the schools have no monopoly on it," he was quoted in the Chicago

American. "I see no reason at all why men who like football and don't play on school teams should not play professional, semiprofessional, or independent football. And certainly men who like to watch football have a right to see their Sunday games if they want them.... When a [college] football player has been graduated and goes out and plays professional football, I do not consider that he has done wrong ... but I am rather sorry to see him go into professional sport."

All this to-do in the press sprang from a game that, although played on November 21, 1921, did not hit the sports pages for two months. The game was an obscure one, involving two southern Illinois town teams, yet it resulted in seventeen of the best college athletes in the Middle West being declared ineligible. It is a story worth recalling inasmuch as because of it the Bears were to obtain one of their greatest stars, little Joe Sternaman, and because it led to the adoption by the National Football League of strict rules against tampering with college players.

Taylorville, Illinois, county seat of Christian County, was at that time a community of about six thousand people; so was Carlinville, county seat of Macoupin County. Taylorville's "Blacksmiths," long a power in community football, had been beaten, 6 to 0, the previous year by a team from Carlinville. Betting on the return match in '21 was terrific, with almost every citizen of the two towns having placed at least a small sentimental wager. It is said that roughly $100,000 had been bet by each town.

When Carlinville's team trotted out on the Taylorville field, the homefolks' hopes sank. Not a single man in the line-up was a member of the original Carlinville eleven! The regular Taylorville team lined up for the kickoff as their followers resigned themselves to a resounding reversal, both athletically and financially. But they reckoned without the cunning of Grover Hoover, coach of the team, who had been in military service the preceding year.

Taylorville kicked off, and the Carlinville team, called the

Top Row.—Andy Lotshaw, Joe LaFleur, Frank Hanny, Ed Healey, Ralph Scott, Jim McMillen, Oscar Knop, Vern Mullen.
Bottom Row.—George Halas, Larry Walquist, Roy White, Hugh Blacklock, George Trafton,
Hunk Andersen, Ralph Lanum, Edw. Sternaman, Joe Sternaman.

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THE EARLY BEARS—1924 BRAND

EDWARD "DUTCH" STERNAMAN

© *Associated Press Photo*

HAROLD "RED" GRANGE TODAY

Macoupin County Democrats, marched steadily down the field to the ten yard line. Here the referee penalized the Democrats, and with that penalty serving as a tonic, the home club braced. Unable to gain themselves, Taylorville's gallant band battled stubbornly on defense and relied on the skill of their punter. Their courage was rewarded when an end blocked a Carlinville punt and recovered it on the enemy's ten yard line.

Here Taylorville went back into ancient history for a play. They faked a drive into the middle, but the quarterback kept the ball and spun wide around end for a touchdown. The Carlinville end, completely fooled by this hoary hoax, pounded his fists on the ground and wept in futile rage. He had been envisioning All-America honors, and here he was playing sucker to a hick team. The little quarterback who had fooled him was Charley Dressen!

The imported team wasn't discouraged, however. It knew it could win. At half time the boys didn't bother to retire to the dressing room, just sprawled on the field and rested. And then it happened!

Two minutes before the second half was to start, out onto the field trotted a new and strange outfit. They wore Taylorville uniforms, but they weren't the Taylorville players. With machine precision they swung into formation. A half-pint quarterback, his face painted and crisscrossed with strips of adhesive tape, barked signals in a staccato voice that sent shivers down the backs of all Macoupin County. And well it might, for that little quarterback kicked three field goals in the second half as Taylorville won, 16 to 0.

The new Taylorville hero, for all his disguise, was readily recognized as Joey Sternaman, who, together with six other Illinois players including Laurie Walquist and Jack Crangle, backfield stars, had been brought down from Champaign by the astute Grover Hoover, who had learned that Carlinville had "loaded" its line-up with Notre Dame players. He was fighting fire with fire.

Sternaman, barred with the others from college competition as a result of investigation of the game, has always maintained: "I was offered no money either before or after the game, but was persuaded to make the trip as a lark. We knew the game was sponsored by the American Legion, and did not know we were guilty of violating any Conference rule."

Two days before the story of this "scandal" broke, the Bears had come into being. The Staley Company, forced by the business recession to reduce its extensive athletic program, reluctantly elected to give up its football team. Halas and Ed Sternaman applied for and were granted the franchise at the January 28 meeting of the league. They renewed their rental agreement with Veeck and incorporated the club as the Chicago Bears, with themselves as the only stockholders.

In June the name of the American Professional Football Association was changed to the National Football League. This change, as well as the adoption of the name Bears, had its foundation in Halas' baseball loyalties. Although he had played briefly with the Yankees in the American League, he was a dyed-in-the-wool National League fan and ardent Cub rooter.

With the football team playing in the Cubs' park, the transition to Bears was natural. His proposal to change the league's name was a logical second step. How did he come to suggest it? "The other name stunk," he says simply.

In bolstering the Bears for 1922, Sternaman first signed his kid brother Joey. Walquist followed, for he was a friend of Halas and both Sternamans. From Marquette they signed Joe LaFleur, a 233-pound fullback, and from Notre Dame came center Ojay Larson, guard Heartley "Hunk" Anderson, and Hector Garvey, huge tackle who was immediately transformed into an end. These acquisitions offset the loss of "Tarzan" Taylor and the great Chamberlain to Canton. The fiery "Hunk" and Danny Fortmann are rated by Halas as the finest left guards in Bear history. Hunk served as co-coach of

the team twenty years later when Halas re-entered the Navy.

The Bears opened the season with victories over Racine and Rock Island before making their debut at Wrigley Field against Rochester with a 7-to-0 win, Pete Stinchcomb scoring a fourth-quarter touchdown and Joe Sternaman adding the extra point. That drop kick was the first act of a lightning-change routine that was to be a Wrigley Field feature for years. The act was always the same: Trainer Lotshaw, a substitute, or a water boy would trot out on the field carrying a dry, square-toed shoe; little Joey would kneel down, change his right shoe, then calmly kick the point or points. That shoe traveled miles across the gridiron but seldom even touched the ground. When it went places, so did the football. And the Bears.

Fans that day saw plenty of Joe Sternaman, but there was something they didn't see. They saw no trace of the baseball diamond. The skinned portion of the infield had been sodded so that the field was an unbroken expanse of green save for the gleaming white yard markers. It was the first time a baseball park had been sodded for football.

Buffalo was next, and when the Bears won that one, 7 to 0, on a five-yard touchdown plunge by fullback George Bolan and Joe Sternaman's conversion, notions of another championship began to buzz in the clubhouse. But the Bears reckoned without Chamberlain. The man who gave them the title the preceding year now proceeded to knock them out of the race as his Canton Bulldogs escaped with a 7-to-6 victory before a good crowd of twelve thousand. Joe Sternaman scored the Bear touchdown, but his kick for the tying point was wide, as was brother Ed's attempted field goal from the twenty-five yard line.

The second Sunday in November found Halas engraving his name in the record book so deeply it has remained there ever since. He did it with a ninety-eight-yard touchdown run with a recovered fumble.

It was a wet, dismal afternoon. Rain had been falling for

twenty-four hours, and Wrigley Field not only was muddy but covered with standing water that in places measured several inches. At the moment the Bears were in deep water and deeper trouble. Jim Thorpe's Oorang Indians had them backed against their own goal line and seemed certain to score.

Halas, at right end, sensed that Thorpe himself would try for the touchdown in a slash over tackle, so he went crashing in. At the same instant big Hugh Blacklock hit Thorpe at the line of scrimmage. Out flew the ball and Halas grabbed it without so much as breaking stride. George could run, but so could Thorpe, and for all his head start George knew the great Indian was tracking him down. He could hear the "squash, squash" of Thorpe's feet coming closer and closer.

He also knew that Thorpe never tackled from behind. Instead, Jim, through long habit and tremendous speed, would close in on the man he was pursuing and whip his huge body across the back of his victim's legs. The effect was the equivalent of being struck from behind by a falling tree.

Halas ran on one tack until he could almost feel Thorpe's breath on his neck, then he'd side-step agilely and start off at another tangent. Thorpe, unable to anticipate this change, of course, and handicapped by the mud, would have to alter direction himself and so be unable to launch a dive at Halas' flying heels. Now zigging, now zagging, the pair splashed and splattered downfield on a course as dizzy as that of a water bug on the surface of a millpond.

Five yards short of the Indian goal line Thorpe hurled himself through the air, but his trajectory was short, and he barely grazed Halas' heels. George stumbled, slid, and plopped over the goal line, where he lay sprawled in the mud and water, exhausted. A few yards away Thorpe lay like a log in the same sea of ooze.

"Ninety-eight yards?" Halas scoffs at the record books. "We must have gone a hundred and ninety-eight!"

Fresh from their engagement with Thorpe's red men, the Bears might be expected to have the Indian sign on Rock Island. They did, defeating Conzelman's Independents, 3 to 0, on a placement field goal by "Dutch" Sternaman in the final two minutes of play the following Sunday. That was a red-letter day in the life of Halas, for it marked the last time he had to risk his life and limb in physical contact with Ed Healy.

Healy had been an end while playing for Dartmouth, but was shifted to tackle when he joined Rock Island in 1921. As a left tackle he had found himself across the line from the Bears' boss for four games. Their relationship had been unfriendly and violent.

"I'll never forget our '21 game in Rock Island," Halas laughs. "That Healy was big and rough and tough, so I decided to try a new block against him. It was a little number I had dreamed up. Let's say maybe it involved a bit of holding . . . just a wee bit, you understand . . . not much. Anyhow, "Dutch" Sternaman gained seven yards on the play, and Healy was ready to blow his top.

" 'Holding!' he bellowed. 'Holding! You were holding me, Halas. You do that again, and I'll knock your block off.'

"The same signal was called, and again I employed my new block on Healy. Again Sternaman slipped through for seven or eight yards. I was still on my hands and knees when some sixth sense warned me to duck. I had my face half averted from Healy, and I unconsciously leaned farther away. It's a darn good thing I did, for by golly, Healy's big fist whistled past my chin so fast it buried itself up to the wrist in the ground.

"I jumped up and ran to the referee. 'He punched me,' I shouted. 'Slugging! Put him out of the game!' Healy was still bellowing, 'Holding!' And the referee didn't pay the slightest attention to either one of us.

"Right then I decided I'd much rather have Healy on my side than playing against me."

On November 27, 1922, Halas had his wish. In the first player sale in the history of professional football he purchased Healy's contract from Rock Island. The price—$100! One hundred bucks for one of the greatest linemen ever to don football pads, a man destined for years of stardom with the Bears and who is now president of the Bear Alumni Association, perhaps the most unique organization in sports.

Two factors played an important part in the Healy transaction. The Rock Island club had completed its schedule, and Walter Flanagan, its manager, owed Halas $100. Rock Island had no more use for Healy that season, so presto, the deal was on, and although he was short one tackle, Flanagan had $100 more in his coffers and was no longer indebted to Halas.

"I got a hundred bucks a game from the Bears," says Healy, "which was nice, but the thing I appreciated most about being with them was the clubhouse. At Rock Island the clubhouse had no showers and seldom a trainer or a rubber. At Wrigley Field we had a nice warm place to dress and nice hot showers!"

Big Ed was one of the few Bears permitted to hold a regular job elsewhere during the football season. He was getting firmly established in business and played not so much for the extra money as for the fun of the game. When the pressure of business became too strong, in the early phase of the Red Grange era, he reluctantly gave up the game.

Healy made his bow in a Bear uniform on Thanksgiving Day, but despite his presence the Cardinals continued to maintain their jinx over their cross-town rivals. Field goals by Driscoll and B. McMahon (Horween) were the deciding factors in a furious 9-to-0 battle in which fists as well as feet played an important role. The Bear-Cardinal rivalry was indeed growing into a bitter feud.

In his report of the game in the *Tribune* the following morning, Hugh Fullerton described the fistic flurry as follows:

The fight which stirred more interest than play had done came in the third quarter with the Bears on the defensive as they were during the greater part of the hard-fought game. Driscoll, who had been performing brilliantly, strove for a long sweep around tackle, and as he came to the twenty yard line, Halas and J. Sternaman tackled him fiercely. He was picked up bodily and hurled five yards back, badly jarred, and as he struggled to his feet he cut loose a knockout punch at Sternaman.

In an instant there was prospect of a fine free-for-all battle, and the players rushed in, followed by the side-line spectators, to join in gory battle. The officials managed to preserve peace, tore the contestants apart, and banished Driscoll from the game.

The few policemen inside the park ran to the field. The Bears, realizing that the scrap was the result of a flash of temper, offered to waive the rules and let Driscoll return to play. The officials declined, and during the argument another fight started suddenly with three of the Cardinals swinging at Halas, who was knocked flat with a burly Card riding him.

After Halas, J. Sternaman, and Driscoll had departed to the showers, play was resumed.

The Bears, seething over this defeat, demanded a return game, and the Cards quickly agreed, but before it was played, the Bears took time out to defeat "Red" Roberts' Toledo eleven, 22 to 0. They should have saved some of those points for use later, for the Cardinals again proved too tough, winning, 9 to 0, on three field goals by Driscoll, who found swinging his foot more effective than swinging his fist.

In three consecutive games now the Bears had failed to score on the Cards. They had kept the Cards from crossing their goal line, but they could devise no defense against Driscoll's kicking. And so it was that Halas, whose theory was "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em," was more determined than ever to turn Driscoll into a Bear.

CHAPTER 4

PAPA BEAR

JOE ZELLER, big Indiana lineman who was a Bear during the mid-thirties, reported late to practice one morning at Wrigley Field. This violation of a club rule resulted in a twenty-five-dollar fine being levied against him, despite his earnest protestations that he was not to blame for the tardiness. Joe lived on the south side and drove to daily practice in his car.

"The bridge was up," Joe argued, which he supposed would be explanation enough, for, after all, it has been a stock excuse for countless thousands of Chicagoans who have been late to appointments through the years. For anyone journeying from one side of the city to the other, those bridges over the Chicago River have come in mighty handy for alibi purposes. But in the case of Joe Zeller the bridge story was no gag. It was the absolute truth. A raised bridge had kept him tied up in traffic so long that he couldn't reach the park in time for the opening of drill.

To Joe's protestations of innocence, Halas responded with a polite, "Oh, yeah!" Provoked and determined to regain his twenty-five dollars, Zeller did a magnificent job of sleuthing. A few mornings later he came triumphantly to practice bearing affidavits signed by policemen who had been on duty at the time asserting that the bridge was up at the hour specified. He even brought a statement from the bridge tender.

Halas was convinced, and Zeller was forgiven. But the twenty-five-dollar fine stuck.

A few years prior to this episode Luke Johnsos, then a rookie, was exploring a few night spots in the company of

George Trafton. As midnight approached, Luke made his excuses and ducked out of the party, much to Trafton's disgust. The big center remained.

"I've got a piece of the club, Luke," he said. "He can't fine me."

The next morning Trafton reported late to practice and was assessed the customary twenty-five dollars. His protests were loud and plaintive, but the fine remained. George was stuck as thoroughly as though he had backed into quicksand.

On still another occasion, in later years, Paddy Driscoll, on his way from his home to practice, drove into the Loop to give his wife an early start on a shopping expedition. Heading northward he became as bound up as a mummy in traffic. When he arrived at Wrigley Field, practice already had begun. Paddy at this time was an assistant coach, but his position availed him nothing. He, too, was slapped with a twenty-five-dollar plaster by Boss Halas.

"He'd fine himself if he was late," one of the Bears remarked. And so he would, for that's the kind of a taskmaster George Halas is. "Papa Bear" is head of his household, and his word is law. He'll tolerate no disobedience, no insubordination. And yet his boys love him. They'd go through hell and high water if he gave the word.

He asks nothing of his players and assistants that he himself is not ready to do, and he is probably ready to do a bit more in addition. A normal day's work for him is ten to twelve hours, and during football season it is so elastic it frequently stretches to sixteen or more. He cares nothing for sleep if, by losing some, he can figure a way to pull a "sleeper" on a football opponent.

The Bears are set apart by their T formation featuring the man in motion. And why not? In their boss, Halas, they have Mr. Man-in-Motion himself.

The fabled one-armed paper hanger with the itch is a piker compared to Halas, who is so busy he can't take the time to scratch. Into one day he must crowd the affairs of

the Bears and two other enterprises he heads—a jewelry and sporting-goods mail-order house with a new retail store recently opened in elaborate new quarters in Chicago, and one of the city's largest laundries, appropriately named the White Bear—to say nothing of any new money-making ideas that may pop into his active mind. He drives himself with a sort of relentless, intense fury as if he were bent on scoring a touchdown and time was running short. His office phone rings incessantly, and when he isn't answering a call, he's making one. Stop in to see him for a few moments, and you'll get a loud, vigorous, and sincere welcome—and perhaps a few more occasional words as he whirls from phone to phone, calls for his secretary, and jots down penciled notes that quickly become lost in the pile of papers on his desk.

Maybe this furious activity is necessary during the off season, for once the Bears have assembled for practice, Halas has little time for anything but football.

"George is in a daze from the start to the end of the season," says Mrs. Halas, who is the Bears' number one rooter. "He says football is relaxation for him, but he keeps at it twenty-four hours a day. He'd be miserable away from it."

Small wonder, for he has raised the Bears from cubs to ferocious maturity. He has guided them not only with a master's hand on the field but with a Midas touch at the box office. Joe Carr, president of the National Football League from 1921 until his death in 1939, once remarked that "nobody has made much money out of the pro game yet, but a lot of people have gone broke thinking they would." Not Halas. Only twice in their history have the Bears failed to show a profit. In 1921 the loss was $71.63. In 1932, although they won their first championship in a decade, the Bears lost $18,000.

Halas never lost faith in the game's future. He was convinced his idea was a sound one when the Bears and Buffalo drew 12,000 fans to Wrigley Field for their title game in '21. A profit of $1,476.92 the following year only increased his

assurance, and when the Bears struck a $20,000-bonanza season in '24 he knew. That year he and Dutch Sternaman turned down an offer of $35,000 for the club, and they were the same two young men who paid themselves $100 a game three years before.

There were moments after the costly championship '32 season when money was tight that Halas wasn't too sure he could hold onto his beloved Bears. Sternaman, who apparently lacked his partner's supreme confidence in the future of the game, sold out to Halas at the end of that year for $38,000.

Raising $38,000 in the depth of the nation's worst business depression presented almost insurmountable obstacles, but they didn't daunt Halas. He rounded up a group of financial backers and put up his own shares of stock as collateral. Unhappily, four of the backers couldn't raise the money for their promised support, and when the time came for payment of the final note (the $38,000 was to be paid in a down payment and notes maturing in six and twelve months), Halas was desperate.

To his rescue in this crisis came his long-time friend, Charles W. Bidwill, who arranged a $5,000 loan from the Congress State Bank. The Bears were saved. Others who tided "Papa Bear" over this hurdle were his mother; George Trafton's mother, who doubled her money when she finally sold her stock; Jim McMillen, one of the great guards in Bear history and now the club's vice-president; and Ralph Brizzolara, chief engineer for American Steel Foundries. It was Brizzolara who had the unenviable task of keeping the Bears functioning during the war years while Halas and McMillen served in the Navy.

Halas is far from what is termed "a hard man with a buck," but he is a shrewd one. His players insist that in contract talks he can convince them the club is on the verge of bankruptcy. Nevertheless, he pays his men well and treats

them even better, which in large measure accounts for the team's amazing spirit.

One early autumn the club was scheduled for four exhibition games in eight days, a man-killing assignment but one calculated to get everyone in top shape and to give the rookies plenty of opportunity to show their skill or lack of same. The Bears won all four games impressively, and Halas was elated. In a clubhouse meeting he announced that they had done such a magnificent job he felt they were deserving of a $300 bonus each for extra play that was not covered by their contracts.

Gary Famiglietti, the "Boston Strong Boy" and power-charged fullback, leaped to his feet at the announcement and emitted a war whoop that shook the rafters. Then everyone cheered.

Halas beamed. "For this display of enthusiasm," he said, "I'll make it three hundred and fifty bucks!"

That war whoop of Famiglietti's cost Papa Bear roughly $2,000, for at the time the roster numbered some forty players.

Halas has the rare gift of being able to take a large group of husky youngsters of varying habits, tempers, and temperaments and weld them into a smoothly functioning unit. Knute Rockne had that elusive quality. So did Joe McCarthy in baseball. They, too, were masters of psychology, able to tune taut nerves into perfect harmony, to extract from each player something better than his best. They, too, were builders of champions.

The "Bear spirit" is a Halas brand. He starts to blend it the moment a youngster reports to training camp, and keeps everlastingly at it until convinced the young man regards the Bears as the greatest team in football.

In 1946 the Bears acquired a blond giant named Mike Jarmoluk. His tremendous physique marked him as an exceptional prospect, but the fans saw little of him for several games. Meanwhile the veteran Joe Stydahar spent much

time giving him valuable pointers and unobtrusively convincing him he was the luckiest youngster in the world to be with the Bears. Then one Sunday Jarmoluk appeared in the starting line-up. His play that afternoon was so sensational that Halas was asked: "Where have you been keeping him? Why haven't we seen more of him?"

"I was waiting," Halas said, "until I was sure he had the old Bear spirit."

The Musketeers' motto of "One for all and all for one" is the Bears' as well. There are no cliques on the team, and when personality clashes develop, they are quickly smoothed over. Once Halas feared the team was being split by internal factions, so before practice one morning he called the group to attention as if about to launch into a lecture. Instead he began checking off a list of names.

"You," he said, as a name was called, "stand on that side of the room. And you," as he spoke another name, "stand on the other side." When two small groups of puzzled athletes were lined against opposite walls, Halas turned to the rest of the squad.

"Boys," he said quietly, "these are the so-and-sos who are breaking up your ball club. Are you going to let them do it?"

That was the real beginning of one of the greatest of Bear teams.

The pioneer spirit of the Bear boss is reflected in his tremendous pride in the firsts he can claim for his team, and among those firsts he doesn't include championships. What delights him is the fact that the Bears were the first professional club to hold everyday practice; to make movies of games for informational purposes; to make a major league baseball park their home grounds; to make a barnstorming tour; to have a field announcer to name ball carrier and yardage gain on each play over the public address system; to cover the field with a tarpaulin as protection against rain and snow; to have a team song.

Of all these pioneer steps the most beneficial from the

standpoint of increased playing skill was the filming of games. Movies reveal better than any scout report what takes place on the field. Cameramen had been shooting the Bears for some time before the players knew anything about it. The coach would ask, "What did you do on such-and-such a play?" and if the wrong answer was forthcoming, Halas would leap all over the player for not telling the truth. They began to believe the man was omniscient.

The club was in Boston one week end for a game with the Redskins, and Halas, the day before, herded his Bears into the ballroom of the Brunswick hotel. Great secrecy surrounded his every move, and when all the players were seated, the doors were closed, Secretary Frank Halas stationed at one and trainer Lotshaw at the other to stand guard against any intrusion. Then the movies were brought out.

"This is a new technique," Halas declared, "and must be kept secret. I don't want any word of this to get out of this room. Watch yourselves closely in these pictures. Study your mistakes and the actions of the man you're playing against."

Lotshaw tripped the light switch, plunging the room into darkness, and the show began. It was interesting and instructive, and the Bears exclaimed and kidded one another as costly mistakes were made clear on the screen. As the film ended and the lights came on once more, a burst of hand clapping came from the front row.

"A great idea," said a strange voice as the applause continued, "a great idea. I learned a lot."

There, in the very front row, sat "Lone Star" Dietz, coach of the Redskins!

As the Bears stared in incredulity, Dietz arose and walked from the room—out to assemble his Redskins and reconstruct his offense and defense so that the Bears had a rough afternoon the next day.

Halas' influence over the Bears is no less potent than that he has exerted over the sport as a whole. As a long-time member of the rules committee of the National Football

League, he fashioned most of the rule changes that transformed pro football from a tug of war into a free-scoring offensive game. It was he who proposed the careful study of officiating that eventually led to the N.F.L.'s record achievement in 1946 of crowding 160 plays into an average game.

"It is my personal belief," Halas argues, "that one of my greatest contributions to the league was getting Hugh 'Shorty' Ray appointed as technical adviser."

Ray, a walking encyclopedia of football facts and figures, conducted the exhaustive survey that revealed the weaknesses in the playing code, and made the proposals that streamlined the game in keeping with the times. In addition to making his involved studies with a stop watch and rules book, Ray now gives a lecture to each team, explaining the rules, another step in speeding up play. The idea of exploring the rules book with the players is another Halas innovation. That's why the Bears for years knew the rules better than most of their opponents.

Halas was one of the first coaches to book other National League teams for nonchampionship preseason games as the best possible means of getting his players into condition for a heavy schedule. He had learned from experience that playing undermanned "push-over" opponents was practically a waste of time. Many Halas-type conditioning games are now held throughout the country late each summer, most of them under newspaper sponsorship and with charity the benefactor. In 1946 more than half a million dollars was turned over to charity through the medium of these games.

The annual All-Star football spectacle held in Chicago each summer is also pretty much a Halas baby. Arch Ward, sports editor of the Chicago *Tribune,* is acknowledged father of the game, but Halas unquestionably is its stepfather.

The idea of all-star games is nothing new, of course. Back in 1930 the Giants defeated a team of former Notre Dame gridders, 21 to 0, in a benefit game that raised $115,163 for the New York unemployment fund. It wasn't until two such

games proved highly popular features of the Chicago world's fair in 1933, however, that the idea really took root. In one of these games the Bears defeated a group of Notre Dame alumni, 14 to 0, in the other an eastern group defeated the west, 13 to 7. This was strictly an all-star game, the eastern squad being selected and coached by Dick Hanley of Northwestern and the western squad by Howard Jones of Southern California. It met with such astounding and unexpected success that the rush of fans far exceeded the promoters' fondest dreams and also their supply of printed tickets. The announced attendance was 52,090.

Halas long had been irked by arguments advanced by followers of college football contending that a top-flight collegiate eleven could defeat the best professional team. George was convinced the pros, through superior all-around manpower, skill, and experience, could win such a showdown contest, but he also knew that, eligibility rules being what they are, the argument could never be settled. But the popularity of these all-star games gave him an idea. If he could match his Bears against a team of college stars who had just been graduated, a team that would approximate the previous fall's All-America, he'd have the next best means of settling the argument.

Consequently, he proposed the idea to Ward, who at first gave it lukewarm reception but quickly grew enthusiastic as Halas outlined possible procedure including probable cost of promotion and a general financial setup. Papa Bear was so eager for the game that he even went so far as to guarantee against loss should the game prove a flop as a promotional venture.

Ward, one of the country's most astute promoters and originator of the All-Star baseball game, naturally needed no such guarantee. As he thought of it, he became even more enthusiastic than Halas, elaborating and embellishing the idea into one of the nation's outstanding sports spectacles.

The original agreement with Halas called for the Bears to

meet each year an All-Star team selected from among the previous season's college seniors by a nation-wide popular poll conducted by the Chicago *Tribune* and associated newspapers. After two years this contract was modified to send the All-Stars against the champions of the National Football League.

Five times the Bears have appeared in the game, and they have yet to taste defeat. They played to a scoreless tie in the inaugural game in '34, and won a 5-to-0 decision in the rain the following year. In 1941 they won, 37 to 13; in '42 their margin was 21 to 0, and in '44 they won, 24 to 21. A few happenings in those games are worth recalling.

The Bears that first year took the game too lightly. They didn't realize quite what they were going to encounter in what they, from their lofty pinnacle several years removed from the campus, regarded as "college kids." They forgot that these "kids" were good football players, that each would give his all during the time he was in the game, and that what the All-Stars lacked in co-ordination and teamwork they more than made up in spirit.

The phlegmatic Bears were fortunate to escape with a tie, for twice Bill Smith of Washington, later a star end with the Cardinals, missed field-goal attempts. The pro champions had only two scoring opportunities. One fizzled when Bill Hewitt fumbled on an end-around and Ed "Moose" Krause of Notre Dame recovered on the nine yard line, the other when Joe Laws of Iowa and later of the Green Bay Packers intercepted a pass in the end zone.

Although they gave the professionals their first victory the next year, the Bears again failed to score a touchdown, missing by three yards, at which point Beattie Feathers was run out of bounds. A field goal by Jack Manders and a safety by Bill Shepherd, who fumbled and recovered in the end zone, provided the victory margin.

The one-sided Bear triumph in '41 was achieved largely through the All-Stars' insistence on the collegiate unlimited

substitution rule. It backfired not only because it permitted the Bears to use their great but injured quarterback and forward passer, Sid Luckman, only on offense, but because it led directly to a Bear touchdown. Players were parading on and off the field in such an unending stream that George McAfee, the touchdown kid, told Luckman he would stroll nonchalantly over to the side line as the teams were lining up and then go downfield for a pass. Sure enough, no one missed McAfee in the confusion until he was streaking to a touchdown with Luckman's pass.

The All-Stars scored one of their touchdowns on a forty-six-yard pass from Charley O'Rourke, later a Bear, to Jackie Robinson of U.C.L.A., the same Jackie Robinson who, as first baseman for the Brooklyn Dodgers, became the first Negro to play baseball in the major leagues.

Of course, the All-Star game, thrilling though it is as a spectacle, affords no real basis for comparison between college and pro football. The Stars lack team cohesion; the pros are merely preparing for the league season and are far from top shape. Danny Fortmann and Stydahar, two all-time greats among Bear linemen, played side by side for the All-Stars against Detroit in 1936. Their reaction is interesting.

"We were hit hard in that game," Fortmann said, "but not subjected to the beating we had expected. We began to think we had picked a snap in turning professional. How wrong we were! We found that out in a hurry when the Bears met Detroit later in the year. I've never seen such a change in a team. The Lions of that day would have chased our All-Stars right off the field."

CHAPTER 5

THE BEARS' T PARTY

THE T formation is the oldest in football and the most popular, but were it not for the Bears it would be as dead as the dodo. It escaped complete extinction only because the Bears stuck to it through the years from their founding until, in 1930, they were the lone professional team and, for that matter, the only team of prominence using it. The opponents laughed when the Bears lined up to play their T that year, which only goes to show how times can change.

Its present popularity needs no explanation other than Bob Zuppke's definition. "The T formation," the veteran coach once said, "is the shortest path to the goal line." He hesitated and added with a chuckle: "Without procrastination!"

"Zup" should know about the T, for he used a form of it back in 1912—not the old close T but one with the halfbacks and ends out—but he abandoned it as "old-fashioned" and went to the single wing. Zuppke wasn't the founder of the T, of course, for it antedates him by many years. Nor is this going to be any attempt to tell the history of the T formation. Our purpose merely is to reveal how the Bears preserved it, nurtured it, and brought it to full bloom as the game's most potent offense.

Basically the T is the simplest football formation with seven men on the line, the quarterback under center, and three backs stationed directly behind him so that they form a T.

This was one of the six formations into which the Staleys could shift in their first year of being. First the Staleys would group into a preshift with the six linemen and four backs

forming two parallel lines behind center. From this, as the signal was called, the team would shift either into the T, punt formation, the Notre Dame, the Minnesota, or Iowa shifts, or into something that closely resembles what the New York Giants call their A formation today. "The big trouble was that we used up most of our strength shifting," says Halas, and that's why in '21 the Bears were operating almost exclusively from the T.

Through the years as the capabilities of their material changed, so has the Bear offense. In 1934, for instance, the single wing was installed especially for Beattie Feathers, who ran to a National League ground-gaining record, but even in that year the T was employed about 50 per cent of the time.

Its real development came when Ralph Jones was brought in as head coach in 1930. During his three-year term the modern T was created, and the man in motion, who gave the "old-fashioned" style the elixir of life, came into being.

Jones had been experimenting with new variations of the T and the man-in-motion idea in 1926–27–28 at Lake Forest Academy, and he brought the results of these studies to Wrigley Field. His first step in streamlining the T was to make it less compact and more mobile. He split the ends off a yard to five yards and spread the halfbacks so that they straddled the outside leg of the tackles, their heels even with the fullback's toes. From this alignment one man was sent into the line as ball carrier while the other two carried out fakes.

To spread the defense still farther, Jones sent a halfback in motion as a flanker. To many fans the idea of a back going in motion to the right, for instance, when the play might be a quick opener between left guard and tackle seemed silly. They considered it a complete waste of one man who might be used more effectively as a blocker. To this Jones replied that a man in motion actually was the same as

a blocker, for the defense had to cover him, thus eliminating one of their men from the play.

Some of Jones's innovations caused even the Bears to raise a questioning eyebrow when he sketched them in chalk on the blackboard. Jones would see the expressions of doubt on the faces before him and say, "So you think it won't work, huh? The hell it won't! I've been working it for twenty years."

"And," adds Red Grange, "he was right. It would work."

Grange, who was so much to football in so many ways, was also the first man to go in motion opposite to the generally accepted standard manner, the man to set a new style. He became such in the midst of a close ball game in 1930.

The Redhead had been going in motion to the right, and the defense had been shifting to cover him, but Red was weary of being used as a decoy instead of a ball carrier. During a time out he and quarterback Carl Brumbaugh cooked up a scheme whereby he'd take a step in the direction of his usual fake to the right, but then go to his left. Neither he nor Brumbaugh is quite sure of the exact sequence of events in that game, but they know the results were phenomenal.

"As nearly as I can recall," says Brummy, "the fullback followed Red the first time he went to the left. That left no backer-up, and Bronko Nagurski went through the line for a good gain. The next time the halfback covered Red, and I threw a pass to Luke Johnsos in the territory the halfback should have been defending. The third time nobody followed Grange out, so I threw him a pass for a touchdown."

Another startling advance in the development of the T came through George Trafton's trick of using only one hand to give the ball to the quarterback, who by this time was crouched behind the center instead of squatting. The more erect stance enabled the quarterback to carry out his spins, fakes, and hand-offs more effectively and with greater deception.

In the T the center is a full blocker whether he uses one or two hands in snapping the ball to the quarterback. That is because he does not have to look backward at the quarter as he passes the ball, but can make his charge simultaneously with his pass. By snapping the ball with one hand, however, he had the free use of one arm, which increased his effectiveness on offense and helped make the T go.

Time was when only the quarterbacks were given special instruction on ball-handling for the T. Now the center comes in for his share, much of it done in collaboration with the quarter. Bulldog Turner, the Bears' modern all-league center, has refined his play to such exactitude that he turns the ball crosswise as he hands it back, thus placing it in the hands of quarterback Sid Luckman so that the lacings are in the precise place where Sid wants them to insure a good grip for passing.

Effective as the T proved to be with the man in motion added through Jones's coaching genius, it still left much to be desired. It gave the Bears a championship in '32, but it produced such a succession of low-score games, ties, and scoreless periods that one college coach remarked, "The Bears have the only offense in football that, if left alone long enough, will stop itself."

"Our offense had one great weakness," Halas analyzes, thinking back over the years. "It concentrated too much into the middle. We had no way to get around end effectively." Then his eyes sparkle and he adds, "But we turned that weakness into our strength."

For this great about-face, Halas gives full tribute and credit to Clark Shaughnessy, whose unhappy lot it was to be football coach at the University of Chicago during the days when the sport was dying of malnutrition there. The graying, somber-visaged coach would gratify his longing for good football by watching the Bears on Sundays. He was a dreamer, a strategist, a man of vivid football imagination tempered by sobering experience. He did not use the T at

Chicago, but what he saw of the Bears' style intrigued him, and in December 1936, he and Halas began a series of huddles over charts and diagrams.

"When we began, as I said, we didn't have any effective way of getting around end," Halas maintains, "but in those sessions Clark and I figured out twenty-one different ways of skirting end, turning the outstanding weakness of our T into its strongest point.

"Luke Johnsos also is deserving of great credit for streamlining our T and devising some of our most effective stratagems. He has exceptional insight into football offenses and what makes them tick."

Halas, for some obscure reason, prefers to remain in the background and give credit for the development of the modern T to Jones and Shaughnessy. But if one takes the word of the Bears, who should know, it was Halas himself who made it a great forward-passing offense, who added the variations until the Bear repertoire contains approximately four hundred plays.

"Halas is the smartest football technician in the country," Johnsos insists, to which Grange adds, "He's at least five years ahead of all other T formation coaches. No matter what the defense, he always has something that will work."

To translate his five-foot shelf of football knowledge into victories, Halas needs players with brain as well as brawn. His quarterbacks especially must be selected with meticulous care and groomed for from one to three years before they master the Bear system.

Some curious fan once asked, "Are all your quarterbacks Phi Beta Kappas?" And Halas replied, "No, but they could be by the time they learn the signals."

It isn't only the quarterback who must be a student under the Bear system. Every player must know his assignments thoroughly, and if he doesn't, he feels the mistake in his pocketbook. But in order to understand how thoroughly the

Bears are schooled in their assignments, it might be well to follow them through a typical day in training camp.

Reveille is at 7:30. Breakfast is a half hour later and is followed by a brief rest period for purposes of digestion, then the squad is assembled on the practice field for two hours of concentrated drills on fundamentals, signals, ball-handling, and the like.

Lunch is served at 12:30; then there is nothing to do until three o'clock when all hands are back on the field for a work-out lasting two and a half hours and which, very likely, will include a brisk scrimmage. After a shower and dinner the grind begins again as the players are herded into classrooms for chalk talks and lectures. Sometimes the squad meets as a whole; sometimes the ends, linemen, and backs split into separate groups for instruction on specific assignments. That winds up the day's work for all but the quarterbacks, who are corralled for another half hour or more with Halas and Driscoll, the backfield coach.

Each player has a notebook in which he keeps the plays and his assignments on each. To make certain the lessons are learned thoroughly, written examinations are held periodically, and mistakes are punishable by cash fines. Consequently, the Bear camp resembles a college campus, with large young men in rough clothes walking around with books under their arms, or sitting under a convenient tree or on a step, book open in lap, studying.

And woe betide a Bear who loses his notebook. That dereliction from duty means a fifty-dollar fine.

One evening while the team was encamped at St. John's Military Academy at Delafield, Wisconsin, Ed Kolman, burly tackle from Temple University, hid his notebook in a bush while he went for a walk. When he came back, the notebook was gone, and frantic scrambling among the bushes failed to reveal its whereabouts. Ed knew it couldn't have walked off of its own accord, and he was reasonably sure there was no

enemy in camp to steal it. *Ergo,* someone was playing a trick on him.

Kolman's suspicions were directed toward tackle Lee Artoe and end Dick Plasman, and he accused them of hiding it. With looks of outraged innocence Artoe and Plasman shook their heads solemnly and let the distrait Ed sweat for thirty minutes before returning the book. Artoe steadfastly denied the charges of some of his teammates that he agreed to reveal the whereabouts of the notebook for twenty-five dollars, thus saving Kolman half of the fifty-dollar fine he would have had to pay Halas.

The paper work doesn't end with these examinations. On the morning of the first practice following a game, each player must submit a written report of the game, pointing out what he noticed about his opponents and their style of play—any detail that might prove useful in a return game or in further refining the Bear T.

One Tuesday morning in midseason Joe Maniaci, who had been out of action with injuries, checked into the clubhouse empty-handed.

"Where's your report?" the coach demanded sternly.

"I didn't make any," said Joe. "I wasn't in the game."

"What difference does that make?" Halas stormed. "You saw it, didn't you?"

How do the Bears find the manpower to make their system work? The rookies are hand-picked as a rule, and the selection goes far beyond Zuppke's contention that Halas is the country's best judge of football material on the hoof.

Each year the club mails out to college seniors an elaborate questionnaire, and from the replies the Bears can tell quickly which players can be eliminated and which ones have the physical and mental attributes and experience to fit into the Bear system. Halas is assisted in this detailed work by Frank Korch, and between them they have compiled an elaborate file of college players ranging from the greenest freshmen to All-American seniors. Even so, many

of the greatest rookies are discovered through recommendations of members of the Bears' Alumni Association.

This organization, the only one of its kind, was founded by Halas in 1937 when he invited all his old players to return to see the final game of the season and wine and dine at his expense. This meeting grew into an annual session and a permanent organization with Ed Healy as president for the last three years. These oldsters, many of them fat and bald now, but still loyal Bears, earmark some youngsters for delivery to the Bears almost by the time they're out of high school.

The "alumni" are going a step beyond that now. They are setting up an advisory board to furnish guidance for the young active players and in time hope to develop it into a job-finding agency to help Bear cubs get a foothold in the postathletic business world.

"Fellowship is fine," says Healy, "but it isn't everything. We old Bears want to lend as helpful a hand as possible to the new ones."

CHAPTER 6

TRAFTON THE TERRIFIC

THE skies over Rock Island, Illinois, were clear one autumnal afternoon in 1920, but there was a storm brewing. It was to center about the head of George Trafton, who seemed to be the center of everything, be it the Staley's line, a pile-up on the field, or a brawl off the field. Warning mutterings of thunder came rolling from the stands as the fans grew more and more indignant at the damage Trafton was inflicting on their football team. Four Rock Island players had been knocked cold in something less than a dozen plays, and the entire blame was being heaped on Trafton.

Big George had suspected all along that this was going to be an eventful afternoon. He had heard rumors around the lobby of the team's hotel in Davenport, Iowa, the preceding evening that Rock Island had hired a player specifically for the purpose of removing Trafton from the game by violence, trickery, or whatever means might be necessary. Trafton immediately placed a bet at the tasty odds of five to one that he'd still be in action at the final whistle, but after a few plays he wasn't sure he had made a good wager.

"Why don't you play football," he challenged a big Rock Islander at the end of a scrimmage, "instead of trying to kick my brains out? Of course, I know you're getting two hundred bucks extra for doing it, but you're not going to collect."

A few moments later the pugnacious Islander was led away for repairs. Somebody, during a pile-up, had inadvertently placed a cleated foot in his face. That somebody, Rock Island felt sure, was Trafton.

"The Independents had a fast halfback named Chicken," Trafton relates, "and I tackled him right on the side line.

There was a fence close to the field, and after I hit Chicken, he spun up against a fence post and broke his leg. After that the fans were really on me."

George knew trouble was afoot, and at the final gun he sprinted for the nearest exit. As he passed the bench, Trainer Lotshaw tossed him a sweat shirt and a shouted admonition to "put it on and cover up your uniform number." Just as a precautionary measure Trafton also snatched up a couple of empty milk bottles from the water bucket. "Dutch" Sternaman was waiting in a cab, but as George leaped in, rocks came crashing through the windows, so he went right out the other door and kept on running in the general direction of Davenport. Before he had gone more than a few hundred yards, a shiny new blue Mercer pulled up alongside and a man said, "Where you going, kid?"

"Davenport," puffed Trafton, "in a helluva hurry."

"Jump in," said the man, swinging open a door. No second invitation was needed.

That probably was the only time in his life George Trafton ever ran away from trouble or excitement, but it won him a job as special messenger for Halas the next time the team played in Rock Island.

Ball clubs in those days were paid off in cash after each game. Not that the promoters distrusted one another or suspected a Goodyear quality in one another's checks. They were simply careful and preferred to have cash in hand and run the risk of being thumped over the head with a piece of lead pipe wielded by some thief intent on obtaining the day's proceeds. So it came about that when the team returned to Rock Island, Halas handed the day's take—$7,000—to Trafton as he started from the field at the game's end.

"I knew," said the astute Halas, "that he'd be running for his life, whereas I'd have nothing to run for except the seven thousand dollars."

Trafton was an indestructible, handsome, happy-go-lucky giant who was the Bears' first center and practically their

only one for thirteen seasons, finally retiring after helping win a championship in 1932. This places him one behind Mel Hein's mark for longevity among linemen, although topped by Johnny Blood, the "Vagabond Halfback," who played fifteen years in the National League and coached a few seasons before going into the Pacific to fight the Japs.

In 1930 Trafton was not offered a contract, and word quickly spread through Chicago's Loop that he had retired. George squelched this rumor and caused the Bear management no little surprise by releasing this announcement to the press: "Although the Messrs. Halas and Sternaman did not offer me a contract, I've joined their squad anyway and am going to make them give me back my old job as center."

He reported to Ralph Jones, the new coach, who told him to be in uniform at nine o'clock the next morning. At 9:30 Trafton came strolling nonchalantly onto the field and was ordered back to the clubhouse before he had time even to say hello to his teammates. The next morning he was in uniform at 8:45 and remained an early bird all season. What's more he played good football and lots of it.

Before the Bears went into training for the 1931 race, Halas, planning to build with youth and discard some of the older players, summoned Trafton and told him he was through. The big fellow bristled.

"Fire me?" he roared. "Not a chance! I'm playing football with the Bears this season, and you're going to like it. After all these years here we are ready to step out as the world's greatest team, and you talk about giving me the gate! No boss of mine is going to get away with that!"

The line about "the world's greatest team" melted the Halas heart and won Trafton two more years of service with the Bears and the opportunity to help them become world champions.

Trafton played football at Oak Park High School, joined the army in 1918, and captained the Camp Grant eleven. He was so good he attracted the attention of many colleges and

was besieged by offers to continue his schooling after the war. He chose Notre Dame and played with the Fighting Irish in 1919. Then he hooked up with Halas and the Staleys in '20.

Trafton, now assistant coach of the Los Angeles Rams, still scorns any but the performers' entrance to a sports event. He's been associated with almost every sport save horse racing, and he might have tried his hand at that, too, if he'd not been too big to be a jockey. He's been at times a boxer and a wrestler. He has operated a gymnasium, he has managed fighters, and always he has been a grand sport, a prince of good fellows.

Stories about Trafton are exceeded in number only by those about the farmer's daughter. His teammates never tire of reciting his exploits.

"He was a great center on defense," Jim McMillen says, "but lazy as blazes on offense. Pictures of our games showed George standing with one hand on his hip after passing the ball back and just gawking around. Herb Stein cured him of that. Stein was playing a roving center about five yards back of the line. He spotted Trafton stargazing, got a flying start, and rammed George squarely in the belly with his head. It knocked Trafton four yards backwards and out cold. That cured him. After that he just laid down after he snapped the ball!"

One day at Wrigley Field a fumbled ball bounced and squirted and tumbled from one player's hands to another's until a half dozen had touched it, finally coming to rest in the arms of a Bear opponent who had been knocked out of bounds but scrambled back onto the field in time to retrieve the elusive oval.

Jim Durfee was the referee, and his decision went against the Bears. Trafton, never one to accept an adverse ruling without an argument, protested loudly.

"Now, now, Georgie," Durfee admonished, shaking a finger, "that play is specifically covered under rule five, sec-

tion three, page twenty-three. Let's get on with the game."

Several days later George got to thinking about the game and, for his own information, decided to look up rule five, section three, page twenty-three. It read:

"No player shall wear equipment which, in the opinion of the referee, endangers other players, and all men must wear on the back and front of their jerseys identification numbers."

As big and strong and rough as Trafton was, it occasioned no surprise to see him astride an opponent, pressing his nose into the mud; it was rare indeed to see Trafton with his own proboscis in the muck. One opposing guard, finding George in such an unusual position, remarked, "Why, George, what are you doing down there like that?"

"I lost fifteen pounds out on this field last week," shot back Trafton, "and I'm trying to find them."

One year the Bears were playing an all-star pro aggregation in an exhibition game in Memphis. Cal Hubbard was at center for the all-stars, and he decided the safest thing to do on offense was to pass the ball back, then lunge at Trafton, and grab and hold much as though he were making a tackle. The all-stars began a drive that swept from deep in their own territory to the Bear five yard line. From there Ken Strong charged through to within a yard of the goal, but Memphis was set back fifteen yards for holding.

Hubbard was visibly upset. "What the hell are you calling a penalty on me now for?" he asked the official. "I've been holding him on every play all the way down here, and you never said a word."

"I know," replied the official, "but Trafton didn't tell me until just now."

In December of 1929 Trafton switched his multiple talents from the gridiron to the prize ring on a spur-of-the-moment impulse and thereby furnished pugilism with its most hilarious evening. His fight with Arthur "the Great" Shires, stormy first baseman of the White Sox, is a milestone in Chicago's

sports parade. Five thousand people paid $18,000 to see it, and two thousand more were turned away because the arena already was bulging to capacity.

Why all this public clamor over a fist fight between a football player and a baseball player, neither one of whom knew even the rudiments of boxing? Simply because the two men brought to the ring's canvas a splash of color more brilliant than any in which Maxfield Parrish dipped his brush.

Shires was in the major leagues only a few years, but they made up in action what they lost through brevity. He first attracted attention for his pugilistic tendencies in a brawl with club officials that became so involved that Lou Barbour, the Sox traveling secretary, sank his teeth into a convenient thumb, an excellent offensive gesture had it not been that the thumb happened to be his own.

Art finally decided to pick up some off-season money by turning his aggressiveness to the ring. He made an impressive debut by knocking out one "Mysterious Dan" Daly in seventy-four seconds' elapsed time. While Shires's kayo achievement was the talk of the town, Trafton was celebrating his birthday with a party at his home.

"Why," snorted George in disgust as other Bears lauded Shires, "I could lick the guy with one hand."

Those words sent Garland Grange running for the telephone. "Gardie," Red's younger brother and a capable end for the Bears, dialed promoter Jim Mullen, and before he hung up, had talked Trafton into issuing a challenge to Shires. The incident immediately was forgotten as the party gathered momentum.

Next morning Mullen phoned to confirm the previous night's conversation. He found Trafton peaceful but obstinate. No, George insisted, he didn't want to fight anybody. It was all a joke. Mullen wasn't so easily convinced. He talked to Grange, who relayed the information to Trafton: "He'll give you a thousand dollars and a percentage of the gate."

"That's different," George agreed. "For a grand I'd fight anybody."

So "Gardie" Grange, who thought up the whole thing as a joke, became Trafton's manager and trainer, and the fight became almost the sole topic of the sports pages. All was serene until one afternoon at the gymnasium when two shady-appearing characters approached.

"Who's goin' to win the fight?" one demanded.

"Me," said Trafton.

"Like hell you are," said a cold voice. "You lose or we'll knock you off."

That incident would have stopped the fight right there, for neither Trafton nor Grange had any desire to be killed or any intention of taking part in a fixed bout. They'd have called the whole thing off but for another visitor whom they recognized as "Machine Gun" Jack McGurn, now dead of gang bullets.

"Who's going to win?" McGurn asked.

"Me," said Trafton again.

"Anybody been talkin' to you?" McGurn asked. He was told the story of the previous visitors and advised the fight was going to be called off.

"Don't worry," said McGurn. "Don't you worry. There ain't going to be any trouble. I think you can whip Shires. I just wanted to be sure everything was on the level."

Trafton and Grange never heard from their first two callers again.

The fight was scheduled for a Monday night in the roller rink at White City amusement park on Chicago's south side. On Sunday afternoon Trafton trained by playing one quarter of the Bears' game against the Giants and his own archenemy, Benny Friedman.

"Friedman used to drive Trafton crazy," Grange recalls. "As Benny would start toward the line, he'd raise his arm aloft with the ball in his hand as though he was going to pass. If Trafton backed up to protect against the pass, Benny

would run right through the middle; if he stayed in the line, Benny would throw a pass over his head. Those tricks of Benny's had a lot to do with the adoption of the six-man line on defense. He also established the pass as a scoring weapon."

The night of the fight Trafton sat in his dressing room wearing a blue robe and a black eye, the latter received the day before while tackling Tony Plansky, the league's toughest fullback of the pre-Nagurski era. As George waited for the summons to the ring, in wabbled a visitor who had partaken of more than one drink too many. He staggered across the room and all but sat in George's lap.

"I wanna tell you how to whip Shires," he mumbled. "Jush stick out your left hand and let him run into it."

Trafton being the bigger man, that seemed like good reasoning. The more George thought it over, the more logical it appeared. He decided to put the theory to a test.

Shires was a gorgeous sight as he climbed through the ropes into the ring. He was clad in a flaming red silk robe with the legend "Art the Great Shires" in white letters on the back. His seconds had red sweaters bearing the same lettering. Trafton, with his blue robe, was drab in contrast. The weights were announced as Trafton, 218 pounds; Shires, 187½.

The first round was a pier-six brawl dignified with gloves. Shires rushed in striving for a quick knockout, but Trafton held him off with a long left hand thrust into his face. But soon all pretense of science was abandoned, and the boys began to swing roundhouse punches. Trafton whistled a ponderous right to the jaw, and Shires went to his knees, arms entwined around Trafton's legs in a feeble tackle. He was up without a count but went down again near the end of the round from an uppercut. The bell saved him from a possible knockout, for he arose at the count of two, just as it rang, then went down again without being hit.

In the second round Trafton's right once more sent Shires staggering into the ropes, but from that point on any re-

semblance between a fight and what was happening in the ring was purely coincidental. Both men were too tired to punch and near collapse from exhaustion. Wearily Trafton backed around like a worn-out crab, while Shires could summon neither the energy nor the desire to catch up with him. Fans were rolling in the aisles with laughter and making bets that neither would be able to stand up until the end of the fifth and final round.

Both remained perpendicular to the end, but the final bell was the most joyous sound either could imagine. The decision of referee Norm McGarrity and judges Joe Leimert and E. L. Cook was unanimous for Trafton, but as a fighter big George had proved himself an excellent football player—an opinion verified a year later when he was knocked out in the first round by Primo Carnera.

Near the end of the fight Trafton looked over the ropes and grinned feebly at Halas and the Bears, who were in a group at the ringside. "I heard you yelling, 'Hit him,' " he apologized to his teammates later, "but I couldn't get my hands up. They weighed a hundred pounds apiece."

If that week end was a strenuous one for Trafton, so was it for another Bear lineman, Bill Fleckenstein, a guard from the University of Iowa who was a quiet fellow in civilian clothes and a wild man in his football pads. "Fleck" had delivered what one newspaper described as a "full-blown right hook" to the nose of Cliff Ashburne on the final play of the Sunday game. The entire Giant team lit out after him, and "Fleck" escaped only by diving headlong into the safety of the passageway leading underneath the stands to the Bear dressing room.

His misadventures didn't end there, however. The next night at ringside he was seated directly behind Carroll "Pat" Flanagan, who was describing the Trafton-Shires bout to the radio public. In the heat of the fight Fleckenstein took exception to Flanagan's words, reached around, and dealt him a solid bop on the whiskers. Flanagan emitted a shocked, "I've

been hit!" but stuck manfully to his mike, although he obviously didn't find the rest of the fight as funny as did the other spectators.

Trafton also tried his luck briefly at wrestling, his manager taking him into the Pennsylvania coal fields for some build-up matches as he learned the trade. George won eight in a row, then was paired against a character billed as the African Tiger. Naturally he figured this to be just another stepping-stone in his budding career and that the Tiger would be tamed after about a quarter of an hour of furious action. Fifteen minutes passed, and the Tiger was still ferocious. George was getting tired, so he whispered in the Tiger's ear, "When are you going down?"

To his utter consternation the African Tiger whispered in reply, "I'm supposed to win in one hour and twenty-five minutes."

That closed the Trafton wrestling career. It ended six seconds later with his shoulders pinned to the mat and the African Tiger wondering what had happened.

Trafton fared much better as a handler of boxers. He made his gymnasium a paying proposition, the only one of its kind in Chicago for years, and he managed several fighters, most prominent of whom was Willie Joyce, with tact and success. He became a solid, successful businessman.

But George, for all his native intelligence, shrewdness, and business acumen, is a sucker for a practical joke. Time after time he would fall for the moth-eaten telephone gag, whereby the caller would ask, "Is Mr. Trafton in?"

"This is Mr. Trafton," George would reply.

"Just a moment, I'll see if he's in."

"Dammit," George would bellow, "this is George Trafton!"

"No," would come the voice, "there's nobody named Trafton here." And he'd hang up, leaving Trafton sputtering at the other end of the line.

Some years ago he took one of his fighters to Milwaukee

for 10 per cent of the gate receipts. The boy was the hit of the show. Several weeks later another show was being held in the same arena, but George's boy wasn't included on the card. The oversight launched Trafton on a tirade against the stupidity of certain promoters.

A friend who chanced to overhear the outburst visited Milwaukee the next day and dispatched a telegram, signing the promoter's name and offering Trafton's fighter 5 per cent of the gate if he would appear on the card. George flew into a rage. He spent $22 in long-distance phone calls to promoters, political leaders, and members of the Wisconsin state boxing commission before he discovered they didn't know what he was talking about.

One day in 1944 Trafton met Curly Lambeau, coach of the Packers, on the street. "What's the matter with the Packers?" he demanded. "They don't sock 'em and rock 'em in the line like they used to do. They need a little life, a little fight."

Lambeau hired him as line coach, and forthwith big George, who for more than a decade was one of the most hated men ever to visit Green Bay, helped the Packers to a world championship. He switched to the Rams in 1945, and they, too, won a championship.

Great as George is as a coach, he was even better as a player. In any discussion of great centers three names always rise to the top—Mel Hein of the Giants, "Bulldog" Turner of the Bears, and Trafton. George came first in point of time, and many contend he's first in other ways, too. Certainly he left his imprint on the game by developing the one-handed snapback from center.

There should be a pinnacle reserved for George Trafton among such greats as "Dizzy" Dean, Babe Ruth, Harry Greb, or Walter Hagen—men who blended color and skill into sports immortality.

CHAPTER 7

THE REDHEAD

TRAINER LOTSHAW could see no logical reason why Frank "Duke" Hanny should not have his ankles wrapped and taped like the rest of the boys. Duke, a fine end from Indiana, had joined the team that fall of '23, but he seemed to have no interest in the impending game. Indeed, he appeared quite provoked that he was made to suit up at all. By some adroit questioning Andy discovered that Hanny's fiancée was due to reach Chicago on an early afternoon train and that he was no little put out because he couldn't get permission to meet her. That pique obviously was behind his refusal to submit to a taping job, but Lotshaw couldn't break it down, and Duke lined up for the kickoff untaped.

Two minutes later Hanny was back in the clubhouse and leaping into his street clothes. Duke had discovered an easy way to meet the train and his girl and still earn his salary—he had slugged an opponent on the kickoff in full view of an official and was put out of the game!

Such was the ingenuity of the early Bears.

Hanny, who broke into the Bear line-up along with Johnny Bryan of Chicago and Oscar Knop of Illinois, kept the team in the championship race through the '23 and '24 seasons with punting that was phenomenal, especially in the Cardinal game of '24. His first eye opener was kicked from his own ten yard line and bounded over the Cardinal goal line for a touchback. His next, booted from his end zone, bounced out of bounds on the Cardinal eight yard line. For good measure, Hanny ran sixty-five yards to a touchdown with an intercepted pass.

He and Bryan made newspaper headlines through football

brilliance alone, but their fellow rookie, Knop, got his name in much larger type in a much more novel way. The play that was to bring Knop undying fame occurred in a game against the Columbus Tigers at Wrigley Field in 1924 and involved Paul Goebel, Michigan's stellar end who is now a Western Conference official and who served as engineering officer aboard an *Essex*-class aircraft carrier during the war. Goebel was the intended receiver for a forward pass thrown by Winters, but it popped out of his arms and was snatched out of the air by Knop.

Oscar cuddled the ball to his bosom and set off for the goal line as 6,000 fans screamed and shouted and roared. The louder the screams, the faster big Oscar ran and the faster Oscar ran the louder grew the screams. Oscar Knop was running toward the wrong goal!

Instead of sprinting toward a possible seven points for the Bears, Knop was speeding to a safety and two points for the Tigers. In hot pursuit on his heels raced Joey Sternaman and Healy, Joey yelling frantically at Oscar to stop and Ed saving his breath for the chase. For thirty-five yards big Oscar ran, head down, legs churning, his two teammates in pursuit, and everyone else convulsed with laughter. Four yards from the Bears' goal line Healy threw himself in a flying tackle that brought Knop to earth in time to save him the ignominy of scoring for the enemy, but not soon enough to save him from the embarrassment of a headline that read: "Backward, turn backward, O Knop, in thy flight." The Bears won the game, 12 to 6.

Indeed, the Bears lost only three games in those two years but finished second to Canton and Cleveland. The latter club split a two-game series with the Bears in '24 but took the title on the strength of one more victory.

Walter Camp, father of the All-America idea that soon was to sweep the country like the dance marathon craze or a Jo Stafford recording, watched the Bears that fall and couldn't take his expert eyes off one man.

"Who is that magnificent tackle?" he inquired.

"Ed Healy," he was told, "Ed Healy of Dartmouth."

"Hum-m-m," Camp mused, "Healy. Hum-m-m. Wonder how I ever missed him at Dartmouth? He's the best I ever saw."

The reason Camp missed seeing tackle Healy at Dartmouth was that big Ed wasn't a tackle during his college days. He was an end, and not too good a one, either. It wasn't until after he turned professional that Healy developed into a giant in stature and ability.

In 1925 the Bears slipped to sixth as the Cardinals won the title, but although their record was an indifferent nine wins, five defeats, and three ties, they usurped the headlines as no professional eleven had done before or is likely to do again. They did it in one masterful stroke by signing the most publicized grid star in history, Harold "Red" Grange.

The name Grange was on the tongue of every football fan in '25. The "Galloping Ghost" newspapers called him. For three years in the orange and blue of Illinois he had run Big Ten Conference opposition ragged; he had gone east and ravished Penn; he had inspired thousands of typewriter rhapsodies; only Babe Ruth rivaled him in the affection and admiration of the sports public.

As Grange moved toward his final collegiate game against Ohio State the question, "Will Grange turn pro?" became such a disputed one that it graduated from the sports pages to the news sections and even to the editorial pages. In collegiate circles pro football still was scorned as something unclean; to be touched by its commercialism was to be tainted, defiled. School leaders preached of his duty to remain at Illinois. Most editorial writers, however, saw no logic behind such reasoning. Let Grange turn pro, they argued, and cash in on the one skill he possessed in more abundant measure than any other mortal. Would there be any furor if a master musician or artist should leave school

to make a proffered fortune at his art? What was the difference?

While Red was preparing for the Ohio State game and the papers were chronicling his every move, his future actually was being charted in a Chicago hotel room. The men who sat around the plotting board were Halas and Ed Sternaman, representing themselves and the Bears, and Charles C. Pyle and Frank Zambreno, representing Grange. Pyle, soon to be known to the sports world as "Cash and Carry," was a Champaign, Illinois, theater man whom Grange had accepted as his business manager. Zambreno was in the theatrical business in Chicago.

Halas and Sternaman wanted Grange, but they hesitated at the demands Pyle made upon the anticipated gate receipts. The discussion went on and on through the day, through the night, and into the next day before terms were finally agreed upon that would give Grange and Pyle a healthy percentage.

"We made a tactical error," Halas laughs. "Sternaman and I sat together to lend each other moral support through all this haggling. Pyle and Zambreno were smarter. They'd take turns. While one talked the other would sneak off and snatch a few winks of sleep."

Grange insists Pyle was the only man with more endurance than Halas. "Charley could outlast George," he says, "but it was a great match."

In order to escape reporters at Columbus the night after his final game with the Illini, Grange pulled his hat brim low over his eyes in the best Humphrey Bogart manner, turned his coat collar high around his cheeks, sneaked down the fire escape from his hotel room and into a taxi that had been spotted for him. He climbed aboard the train in the railroad yards.

"I knew then how a criminal must feel trying to escape from a police trap," Grange says.

In Chicago there was more evasive action, and while news-

men watched the Morrison Hotel, where Pyle and Halas were in their marathon powwow, Grange slid unnoticed into the Belmont Hotel, registering under an assumed name. He didn't remain incognito long, however, for that afternoon he sat on the bench with the Bears and watched his new teammates take a 21 to 0 game from Green Bay.

To avoid the milling mob of autograph seekers, Red remained in the dressing room at the intermission until the second half had been under way for five minutes or more, but to his surprise he found that the fans felt if he could miss some of the game, so could they. An estimated three thousand stormed around the runway as he started for the field, and only some strong-arm work by police got him through the toughest line he ever tried to buck.

The professional debut of a star of such magnitude as Grange presented an opportunity for a huge one-shot killing at the box office. Chicagoans would have paid almost any price to see the famous redhead turned loose against the pros, and Halas and Sternaman could have reaped a fortune. But to their credit and the lasting benefit of the sport, they retained the regular season prices instead of tacking on a Grange premium.

Their decision to keep tickets at the season level was influenced by the advice of Bill Veeck, who argued in these words: "Grange is unusual . . . but to my mind he will neither make nor break professional football. The game, as a game, is too well established for one individual to alter its course for long."

Veeck was in error in only one point. Red did alter the course of pro football by focusing nation-wide attention upon the game and giving it its first big-name glitter. He was a shot in the arm, and the effects haven't worn off after twenty years.

Grange made his debut against the Cardinals at Wrigley Field. This annual Thanksgiving Day game usually attracted a gate of about $14,000, but on November 26, 1925, Grange's

take alone was about $12,000 as a capacity crowd of 36,000 fans jammed their way in to watch the Redhead run. He didn't run much, for the teams played to a scoreless tie, and he never had a chance to run at all on punt returns, his specialty, inasmuch as Paddy Driscoll refused to kick the ball anywhere near him.

"It was a question of which one of us was going to look bad—Grange or Driscoll," Paddy explained when reporters asked why he wouldn't punt to Grange. "I decided it wasn't going to be Driscoll."

Grange didn't look bad on the field, despite the lack of much opportunity to shine, but he definitely began to look good in the bank. Over the next two weeks he and the Bears played a man-killing schedule, and when it was done Pyle and Grange pocketed $50,000 apiece. They split their end of the gate fifty-fifty with Pyle paying all promotional expenses out of his share. These figures take in only the football profits and do not include a healthy revenue from endorsements and varied commercial side lines.

The Bears rested on Friday and Saturday, then on Sunday they trotted Grange out onto Wrigley Field again. Snow was swirling down, but 28,000 came to cheer, and cheer they did as Red gained an aggregate of 140 yards in three quarters and the Bears beat the Columbus Tigers, 14 to 13.

This was only the beginning, for then followed a string of eight games in twelve days—the most strenuous schedule ever attempted in football.

Grange was the "Galloping Ghost" of his collegiate days as the Bears whipped a misfit team in St. Louis, scoring four touchdowns for most of the points in a 39-to-6 victory. The St. Louis club was known as "Donnelly's Stars," Donnelly being an undertaker turned "angel" to finance recruiting and training of the players who opposed Red. Magnetic as was Grange's drawing power, however, the weatherman outmaneuvered him, and only 8,000 fans shivered in the stands.

That was on a Wednesday. On Saturday the Bears de-

feated the Frankford Yellowjackets before 35,000 people at Philadelphia. Among the 35,000 were the Giants, who were to play the Bears the next day in New York. What they saw didn't help their peace of mind, for Red put on a high-class show and scored both touchdowns of a 14-to-0 Bear victory that was achieved in a drizzle on a field deep in mud. One Bear swears that he tossed his mud-caked, water-soaked uniform, shoes, and pads onto the scales in the clubhouse. They weighed forty-five pounds!

The jump to New York didn't entail the inconveniences the Bears had to undergo several times earlier when they played the Yellowjackets on a Saturday and moved on to Chicago for a game the next day. For those rides the players would jump on the train while still in uniform and change clothes in their Pullmans. The difficulties inherent in that procedure can be appreciated only by someone who has tried to take a shower bath in the washbowl of a Pullman car.

Despite heroic efforts by trainer Lotshaw the uniforms were still wet, clammy, and dirty when time came to dress for the New York game. The boys hated to struggle into them, but they had no choice. They were a sorry, bedraggled-appearing bunch as they warmed up, and the Giants, neat and snappy in clean uniforms, chorused, "Get off the field, you bums!"

By the time the "bums" finally got off the field much later that afternoon, they took with them a 14-to-7 victory, and a vast assemblage of 65,000 fans in the Polo Grounds went home happy, for they had seen what they came to see—Red Grange score a touchdown. Thousands in that throng knew nothing of football, but they wanted to be able to say they had seen Grange. They cheered his every move, and late in the game when he intercepted a pass and ran to the goal line, they were content even though it wasn't much of a run as Grange runs went. It lacked any side-stepping,

hip-weaving flourishes, for all he had to do was beat a straight path to the goal line.

Three Bear iron men played the full 120 minutes of those two successive bruising games against National League competition—Joe Sternaman, Duke Hanny, and Don Murry. And if they decided to relax that night, who could blame them? Murry, in the midst of the business of relaxing, became embroiled in a washroom altercation during which he threatened to deliver a punch in the nose to a big chap he identified only as "some punk." Fortunately for Murry the punch was never delivered. The "punk" was Gene Tunney!

Murry, who came to the Bears from the University of Wisconsin, was a small man as linemen were measured at the time, but he was tremendously clever. Ralph Jones declares that if Murry had been twenty pounds heavier, he would have been the best lineman who ever lived. Don developed a knack of feinting with his head and shoulders like a clever boxer to lure his opponent off balance and make him easy prey. And as though he had eyes in the back of his head, he could sense when things were going wrong in the backfield.

Not infrequently he would come into the huddle and berate the backs. "You guys aren't faking," he'd protest, and when someone asked how he knew, he'd reply, "I can tell by the way the man opposite me is playing."

On December 8, after one day of rest, the weary Bears played and won an exhibition at Washington, 19 to 0, but the 8,000 fans were disappointed, for Grange made only six yards from scrimmage, his hero's niche being taken by Johnny Bryan, who ran sixty-five yards for a touchdown. Grange was stopped colder than the weather the next day in Boston, and so were the Bears, who suffered their first defeat of the Grange era. It was inflicted by the Providence Steam Rollers in the presence of 25,000. Grange, dog-tired from incessant contact with the ground, with burly linemen, the press, and

the public—he had almost no sleep—got only eighteen and a half yards that day. But he did get some sound advice from Babe Ruth.

The Bambino visited Red in his hotel suite, eager to meet and talk to this youngster who was usurping his place in the sports page headlines. "Don't be too thin-skinned," the Babe advised. "You've got to expect a lot of knocks in this professional racket, and you've got to take a lot of criticism and a lot of insults that you didn't get before. But keep your head up. And don't be afraid to say no when the pressure gets too rough. Get the dough while the getting is good, but don't break your heart trying to get it."

To escape from the admiring public and the swarms of autograph seekers as the club changed trains in New York, Grange had to resort to trickery. He exchanged his fancy fedora and coonskin coat for Vern Mullen's plain cloth overcoat and battered felt hat. The strategy worked.

In Pittsburgh on December 10 the grind began to take its toll. Grange carried the ball on one running play for three yards, caught a pass for four, and then was assisted to the side lines, painfully injured, while the crowd heaped a razzberry bouquet around him. The fans may have thought Red was taking the easy way out, but actually he was so painfully hurt he couldn't sleep for two nights. A kick on the upper left arm had caused a severe hemorrhage.

Grange wasn't the only Bear to break down under the grueling stress of everyday play, for there wasn't a man among the twenty-two who wasn't hurt to a greater or less degree. Johnny Mohardt voiced the sentiments of all when he remarked that "this is strictly a man's game." Mohardt, a fine back at Notre Dame and now one of Chicago's leading physicians, was one of the battered Bears, but he kept busy helping Lotshaw tend to the more seriously injured. Andy had turned the Pullman washroom into a hospital ward and was both day and night nurse to his patients.

Laurie Walquist had a broken toe, Milt Romney a twisted

ankle, Dutch Sternaman an injured shoulder, Joe Sternaman a lame knee, Ed Healy and George Trafton leg injuries, and Halas himself, not to be outdone, developed a boil on his neck. The squad had reached the limit of its endurance and showed it in its play, losing in Pittsburgh, 24 to 0, and in Detroit on December 12 by 21 to 0. Grange was out of that game because he couldn't lift his bruised arm, and the refund booth was the busiest place in the park as the fans demanded their money back because they couldn't see Red perform. Only 6,000 actually saw the game.

The next day the Bears were so battered that fullback Knop played at end, but 18,000 welcomed them back to Wrigley Field where they lost to the Giants, 9 to 0. Grange, in agony with his arm, nevertheless played in this game as advertised so that the Bears wouldn't have to refund any more money to dissatisfied customers.

En route to Chicago for the final game of the tour, the train stopped at Elkhart, Indiana, where Healy and Trafton hobbled across the street to grab a quick sandwich at a lunch counter. They had taken no more than an exploratory bite when Healy shouted in alarm, "George, the train is moving!"

"That Healy had been playing only a little because of his bad knee," Trafton relates, "and I had played almost the full sixty minutes every game although I was banged up, too. Well, we started to run across the street and down the station platform, and that Healy left me behind as though I was tied to a pillar."

Healy's sudden burst of speed enabled him to grab the handrail of the rear car and flip aboard. From the rear of the car he gazed delightedly back at the forlorn and retreating figure of Trafton, standing in his shirt sleeves in biting winter cold and holding aloft a partly eaten sandwich.

"What detained you?" asked Healy sweetly when Trafton reported to the clubhouse next afternoon. George cast him a withering glance. "You're the best damned runner I ever saw for a cripple," he snorted.

Pyle and the Bears were not yet done with the work of extracting full dollar value from the magic name of Grange. An exhibition tour of southern and western cities was arranged, the schedule calling for nine games in thirty days. This time the management was not going to be caught shorthanded, so several recruits were added to the roster, among them Paul Goebel, Roy "Link" Lyman, Ed Garvey, "Dutch" Vick, and "Swede" Erickson.

The tour sent the Bears to Miami, Tampa, Jacksonville, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle, and when it was done, Pyle and Grange pocketed another $50,000 each. From late November to mid-February Grange had made a cool $100,000!

"We were a pretty hot-looking bunch on that tour," Grange laughs in remembrance. "We were all dressed alike with knickers, loud socks, and sweaters with the word Bears across the front and our uniform numbers on the back. There was no mistaking who we were, that's for sure. As a matter of fact that costume almost got one of the boys into serious trouble.

"It seems he had been raising a little hell in a night spot, and the proprietor summoned the police. To avoid trouble our Bear made a hasty retreat to the railroad station where our Pullman cars were set. We had a swell porter on our Pullman. His name was Clem, and I'll never forget him. Anyway, Clem was starting out for a bite to eat just as this player came sprinting down the platform to the cars.

" 'Here, Clem,' he said, peeling off his Bear sweater, 'it's cold out. Better wear this to keep warm,' and he dashed on into the car and leaped into his berth without removing the rest of his clothes. Poor Clem had just reached the station when the police nabbed him and hauled him off for identification. The night-club manager shook his head. 'No,' he said, 'that looks like the same sweater all right, but the fellow was white.'

"Clem was so scared he was pretty near white himself."

The Florida portion of the tour was made about one year too late to hit the jack pot. The real-estate boom had burst in that winter of 1925–26 and money no longer was being tossed around with a lavish hand. Prices ranging from a top of $19.80 down to $8.80 and $6.60 for a game with the Giants at Coral Gables would not have discouraged any ticket buyers a few months before, but now they frightened customers away, and the game was played before acres of empty seats. Pyle, however, collected his guarantee. He did in Tampa, too. The promoter had asked him to waive the promised $5,000 in return for a percentage of the gate, but Pyle refused and threatened to call off the game, agreeing to play only after a committee of the city's leading citizens had made up a pool to pay the guarantee. Financial troubles also beset the game at Jacksonville against a team featuring Ernie Nevers, but despite the succession of difficulties Pyle managed to extract some $25,000 from a boom-busted Florida, which would seem to qualify him to solve the problem of how to get blood from a turnip.

The Pacific Coast phase of the tour was better, especially in Los Angeles, where 70,000 turned out to see Grange. By now Pyle was looking ahead to the '26 football season, and on the train returning to Chicago he went into a huddle with Halas and Sternaman. The Bears were willing to renew their contract with Red and his manager on the same basis, but Pyle insisted in acquiring a third interest in the ball club. The Bears flatly rejected such terms.

Pyle, at outs with the Bears and balked in an effort to obtain the New York Giants' franchise, launched his own league in 1926 thereby starting a war that almost brought the sport to financial ruin. "Big Bill" Edwards, the old Princeton star, was named head of the new league, and Pyle himself took the New York franchise, calling his team the Yankees and, of course, retaining Grange as its featured performer. Members of the supporting cast included Eddie Tryon of Colgate, Wes Fry, Paul Minick, and Lowell Otte of Iowa,

August "Mike" Michalske of Penn State, Pooley Hubert of Alabama, and "Bullet" Baker of Southern California.

Joey Sternaman jumped from the Bears to head the Chicago Bulls in the new American League. This threat of competition presented a definite danger and challenge to the Bears. Not only had they lost two of their best and most popular players—Grange and Joe Sternaman—but the Bulls, who leased Comiskey Park and so forced the Cardinals into tiny Normal Park, threatened to take away their patronage, too.

Of the name players left to the National League in Chicago only Paddy Driscoll still commanded a tremendous personal following. The Bulls were after him, and Chris O'Brien, owner of the Cardinals, feared the limited seating capacity of his park would prevent his matching the Bulls' salary offers. Halas had much the same fears, so he approached O'Brien with an offer to purchase Driscoll's contract. He had coveted the great halfback for years and now saw a chance to gratify his dream.

O'Brien hated to part with Paddy, but for the sake of the league agreed to let him go to the Bears for $3,500 cash. Halas then signed Driscoll for $10,000 to win the first round of a fierce fight that was to knock out the American League after one season.

Driscoll paid off a handsome dividend on the investment in his very first game, kicking a field goal and throwing a fifty-yard touchdown pass to Mullen as the Bears beat the Detroit Panthers, 10 to 7. He also scored all points in a 7-to-0 conquest of the Giants before the Bears and Cardinals met in the first of their two-game series.

A crowd of 12,000 was on hand to see Paddy play against the team he had captained for the six previous years. Across town the same day 20,000 saw Grange and his Yankees oppose the Bulls. The show at Wrigley Field proved the better one as Driscoll put on a one-man demonstration of football, scoring a touchdown and kicking three field goals and an extra point for all the Bear tallies in a 16-to-0 victory. The

Bear fans got something extra for their money, too—music. In an attempt to dress up his football with a bit of added entertainment, Halas hired Jack Bramhall to strike up the band before the game, at half time, and during time-out intervals. This, he believes, is the first time the pros had played to musical accompaniment.

Halas unfortunately never fully savored the enjoyment of that victory, which took place early in October. During the second quarter he received a violent blow on the head and was led to the clubhouse. He seemed rational enough until he inquired of trainer Lotshaw, "Who are we playing today?"

"The Cardinals," Andy informed him.

"Ah," said George, "then this must be Thanksgiving Day. My wife undoubtedly has the turkey cooked by this time."

Then his wandering eye fell on Oscar Knop. The big fullback was recovering from injuries and wasn't in uniform for the game. Halas sat up with a start when he saw Knop in street clothes. "You big stiff," he roared, "get in uniform and out onto that field!"

Right then Lotshaw decided it would be better if his boss, Mr. Halas, did not play the second half.

On Armistice Day the Bears and Cardinals met at Soldier Field in a benefit for Rosary College, and again Driscoll was the whole show, kicking a field goal and throwing a fifty-five-yard touchdown pass to Hanny to account for a 10-to-0 victory over his old team. In the Thanksgiving Day game he was bottled up in a scoreless tie, but before that he helped the Bears to their tenth straight victory, a 19-to-13 decision over the Packers. Paddy seemingly had lost this one when he fumbled and Vern Lewellen recovered and ran forty yards for a touchdown, but late in the game the Packers fumbled, and Paddy scooped up the ball and was off for twenty-four yards and the winning points.

It was at the conclusion of this winning streak that Chamberlain stepped back into the Bears' story. Guy was coaching

the Frankford club and was at left end himself when the Yellowjackets met the Bears with the National League championship hanging on the outcome. The Bears would have won had Chamberlain been content merely to coach, but with him in the line-up they never had a chance. First he broke through to block Driscoll's try for the extra point following a Bear touchdown, then he blocked Paddy's attempted field goal from the twenty-four yard line. Thanks to these two feats the Bears' margin was only 6 to 0 when the game entered its final two minutes. Then the Jackets scored a touchdown, added the point, and took the title by 7 to 6.

Thanks to their winning streak, the Bears managed to show a profit for the season, even though they didn't have a championship. The same could not be said for most of the other clubs in the two leagues. Several of the American League clubs had dropped out before the end of the season, and the league itself was in financial quicksand. Most National League clubs were in shaky condition. Viewers-with-alarm were saying pro football had seen its best days.

Jack McDonough, manager of the Los Angeles club of the National League, was most gloomy, saying, "Professional football has breathed its last. It has failed to strike the popular fancy."

It bounced back as a mighty healthy corpse in 1927, the National League enjoying a good season when rid of the competition of the American League, which did give up the ghost. Pyle, however, made his peace with the National League and was granted a franchise for the Yankees, but the glib promoter had lost his magic touch somewhere in the two-year period and was out of football at the end of the season with Grange injured and his contract with Pyle expired.

Through a strange twist of fate, Grange was injured in a game against the Bears in Wrigley Field. He fell over Trafton, and as he did so a cleat caught such a way that his right knee was badly twisted. He was on crutches for six months

and out of football entirely in '28. In '29 he rejoined the Bears but was never again the old elusive redhead.

"That injury ruined my career," he says. "I never could run or cut again. I was just another halfback."

Red is doing himself an injustice when he says that, for there never was anything ordinary about Red Grange. From the greatest offensive star in the game he transformed himself into its outstanding defensive player. This defensive skill was to save a championship for the Bears in '33. But we'll come to that later.

CHAPTER 8

THE JONES BOYS

THE seasons of 1928 and '29 found the Bears floundering. They dropped a notch to fourth place in '28 with seven victories, five defeats, and a tie, then went into a steeper tail spin the next year when they won only four games, lost eight, and tied two, finishing a dismal ninth.

Only once in history has a Bear team had a worse record—the crippled wartime club of "old men" in 1945—yet the season was notable in at least two respects, one of which was pleasant, the other quite the reverse.

The unhappy incident occurred on Thanksgiving Day when the Cardinals and Ernie Nevers stuffed themselves with Bear meat to the tune of 40 to 6. All of the Cardinal points were scored by Nevers in probably the greatest one-man show since Joe Cook. Ernie made tracks across the Bear goal line six times and kicked four extra points, and these, together with nineteen he had scored against Dayton the week before, gave him a grand total of fifty-nine points in two afternoons.

For those who are curious, the Bears' six consolation points were scored on a sixty-yard pass from Walt Holmer to Gardie Grange.

The acquisition of Holmer that fall was considered a coup by the coaches, but what Halas didn't realize until much later was that he had made a ten-strike, not in signing Holmer but by getting his friend and fraternity brother Luke Johnsos quite by accident at the same time.

Johnsos, who won more of a reputation as a baseball player at Northwestern University than he did on the gridiron, had signed with the Cincinnati Reds for $5,000 at the conclu-

sion of the school year and had finished the season with the Columbus club of the American Association. He chanced to be visiting with Holmer when Halas came to talk contract with the big Wildcat fullback. After settling terms with Holmer, Halas cast an appraising glance at tall, rangy, blond Johnsos.

"Ever play football?" he asked.

"A little," said Luke.

"Come on out to practice then," Halas invited, more to please Holmer than through any notion that he was acquiring a fine end and a permanent coaching assistant. Holmer was gone after a couple of years; Johnsos is still a Bear.

To Johnsos that first year is a big laugh, and he can always hold it over Halas' head in any dispute over salary terms. "I played in all the games," he grins, "and there was Walt sitting on the bench most of the time. He was getting all the dough, and I was doing all the playing!"

At the end of his playing days Luke remained with Halas as a coach of ends, then widened his scope into that of general assistant. A keen football analyst, he sits in the second deck of the grandstand every Sunday afternoon in direct telephonic communication with the bench and serves as the Bears' "grandstand quarterback." He spots weaknesses in the opponents' defense and suggests the proper plays to take full advantage of them. The quarterback calling signals on the field a great many times is echoing Luke's voice from the rooftops.

The Bears were the first professional team to adopt this second-story quarterback idea, but their initial experiment with it struck a snag. Johnsos went aloft in Ebbets Field, Brooklyn, which locale perhaps accounts for the troubles that were a-brewin' for the Bruins. Whenever he'd spot something worth noting, Johnsos would write it down on a slip of paper, wad it up, and toss it over the railing to the edge of the field below, where it would drop in back of the Bear bench and just in front of the box-seat customers. All

went well until the fans near by began to notice that these falling bits of paper, which were quickly pounced on by someone off the Bear bench, were dovetailing all too neatly into the pattern of the play on the field. A dropped paper was followed within a play or two by a substantial gain by the Bears. Thereafter the fans themselves began scattering paper and picking up such wads as came fluttering down from above. That ended the Bears' second-story work for the night and led to the bench-to-second-deck telephone.

Back in '29, however, Johnsos was causing the opposition no sleepless nights by dreaming up offensive didos. He was just a big, raw, inexperienced kid on a ball club that although it had discovered a good end, seemed to be heading for a bad one.

"I'll tell you why we were so terrible in 1929," said one Bear of that vintage. "Halas and Dutch Sternaman weren't getting along. We had two offenses, one devised by George and one by Dutch. Nobody knew what to expect on any play. One day in practice two lone men smacked head on into each other, and one was cut up badly. The team had no precision or timing. You've never seen such a mess."

"Yeah," said another old Bear, "not only that, but we had to sign two separate contracts, one with Halas and the other with Sternaman."

Such was the state of affairs as the Bears headed into the season of 1930.

Strange and momentous things began to befall the Bears with the advent of the "Thrifty Thirties" but strangest of all was Halas' firing himself to get a "competent coach." Not that the term didn't fit perfectly the man appointed. It did. But in light of the happenings of subsequent years any suggestion that Halas himself doesn't rate as more than "competent" verges on the ridiculous.

The only outsider in history to coach the mighty Bears was Ralph Jones, football strategist, developer of the modern T formation, and at that time coach at Lake Forest Academy

at Lake Forest, Illinois. Jones had served for a time as an assistant under Zuppke at Illinois, where his grid pupils had included Halas and Dutch Sternaman. When they decided to get out of the coaching end of the business themselves, they knew instinctively he was the ideal man for the job.

"I'll give you a championship in three years," Jones told his pupils-turned-bosses as he signed his contract. And that's exactly what he did, for in 1932 the Bears won a championship for the first time since they adopted their name. Thereafter they found titles to be a dime a dozen.

In announcing the signing of Jones, Halas said, "Dutch and I have been coaching the team, but we found our other duties interfering. We reached the point where one of us would miss a day here and another there. That didn't do the club any good. Besides"—and here's the stinger—"we thought it best to get a competent coach."

They got more than a coach that fall. They got a one-man football team by the name of Bronko Nagurski, a giant from the north woods whose exploits were to dwarf those of that other fabulous Minnesotan, Paul Bunyan.

Nagurski's achievements are pretty much the story of the Bears for another ten years, and for the most part they're tales of brute strength and bone-shattering power. The Bronk is good-natured and loves a good joke, but there aren't many funny stories told about him. He definitely wasn't funny on the football field, particularly to those poor unfortunates who were called upon to tackle him once he had his 230 pounds rolling in high gear.

It took only a game or two to establish him as a headline figure in Chicago. And at the same time another big youngster was looming large on the city's sports scene. His name was King Levinsky, and his roundhouse punches were cutting a wide swath through the ranks of heavyweight fighters. The King was beginning to make important money, and his thinking followed the dollar signposts almost exclusively. It continued to do so when he met Nagurski for the first time.

"What did you get out of college football?" asked Levinsky, viewing the Bronk's achievements in terms of financial reward.

"Letters," said Nagurski.

"Letters?" asked the King, bewildered. "What did they say?"

The advent of Nagurski at Wrigley Field was offset in a measure by the retirement of Driscoll but supported by the signing of several new men destined to figure prominently in the upswing of Bear prestige. They included the first master quarterback of the T formation, Carl Brumbaugh of Florida; a good fullback, Paul Franklin of Franklin College; and two men who had few peers in the art of punting a football out of sight—Dick Nesbitt of Drake and Joe Lintzenich of St. Louis University.

Brumbaugh, destined to become one of the truly great quarterbacks, had never played the position when he reported to the Bears. Indeed, he very nearly didn't play football at all because of his father's objection to the game as a menace to life and limb. Mr. Brumbaugh was so insistent about Carl's abstaining from the sport that, knowing his son's desire to play, he kept watch on the entrance to the West Milton, Ohio, high-school practice field to make sure his wishes weren't flouted. Even so he underestimated Brummy's yearning for football. The youngster sneaked in to the practice gridiron through the back gate.

Mr. Brumbaugh suspected all was not as he wanted it to be, so he made it a point to attend the first game. He arrived a few moments after the kickoff but just in time to see his son dash sixty-five yards for a touchdown that won for West Milton.

After the game Carl entered the Brumbaugh automobile agency with considerable trepidation, but his apprehension vanished when the first words he heard were those of his father describing the touchdown run in glowing phrases to a group of friends. Thereafter not only did Carl win parental

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BILL HEWITT

THE MAN IN MOTION STALLED

Coach Ralph Jones and some of his 1932 Bears: (*left to right*) Ely, Buckler, Bergeson, Burdick, Trafton, Culver.

blessing for his football endeavors, but his dad followed the team as one of its most vociferous rooters.

Brummy was a halfback at the University of Florida and came to the Bears in the same capacity. But after one look at such left halves as Red Grange, Laurie Walquist, and Bill Senn, he reached an immediate decision to try out as a quarterback. Inasmuch as the squad would number only eighteen men, he figured he'd have a much better chance for retention as a quarterback, a position over which Joe Sternaman had what amounted to a monopoly.

That was a happy decision both for Brumbaugh and the Bears. In the second game of the year Sternaman was injured, and Brummy stepped in as brewmaster of the Bears' T. So thoroughly did he learn the system that every fall he takes time off from his deep-freeze business to help install the T for some team or serve as consultant for ailing offenses.

The opening game of the Jones regime was the scoreless tie with Brooklyn in which the Dodgers laughed the Bears to scorn for using the T, an outmoded offense, and for playing old-style football. The Bears might have won it, though, but for a quarterbacking error by Brummy. With less than a minute to play, the Bears were a yard from a touchdown on fourth down.

"I called for Nagurski [who had started the game at tackle and switched to the backfield] on a mousetrap," Brumbaugh recalls, "and he didn't make it. That was my fault, for I called the wrong play. I should have sent Grange wide. But it taught me a lesson."

The Jones boys won nine games, lost four, and tied one that fall, a vast improvement over the 1929 Bear record of four wins, eight defeats, and two ties. They gained a host of new converts to the professional game, too, although the country was in the grip of depression. The Green Bay game at Wrigley Field attracted 22,000 fans who were rewarded with a thriller as the Packers won, 13 to 12, for their twenty-first consecutive victory. Their margin was a point after

touchdown kicked by Red Dunn. Walt Holmer missed his attempt to tie the score.

Of all their new-found friends, Warren Brown, then sports editor of William Randolph Hearst's old Chicago *Herald-Examiner,* was acquired in the most unique manner.

Warren at the time was the Chicago alumni chapter of St. Ignatius University of San Francisco, and through his efforts the school had scheduled a football game with DePaul University for Sunday, November 23, 1930. The game had its inception the previous year when Brown, on a visit to San Francisco, decided to visit the old campus.

He taxied to the proper street intersection but found only a vacant lot. The school, he was informed, had moved without notifying its only Chicago alumnus. Undaunted, Brown tracked it to its new location and in due course of events was invited to attend the school's football dinner. As a nostalgic touch he wore in his lapel some ribbons of red and blue, the colors he had carried on the athletic field. He felt no little upset when this gesture attracted only a few questioning glances. Discreet inquiries revealed the school's colors had been changed to green and gold. Staggered by this second blow but his loyalty unshaken, Brown helped schedule the football team for the long trip to Chicago and its game with DePaul. One evening during the week preceding the game he entered his office to be greeted by a question: "You're interested in the St. Ignatius–De Paul game, aren't you?"

"Interested?" said Warren. "I've done everything for it except proselyte some players."

"Well," said a copyreader, looking up from his desk, "the name of St. Ignatius has just been changed to the University of San Francisco."

The Chicago alumni chapter was dumfounded. Then, regaining his powers of speech, he said, "To hell with the game. I'll go see the Bears." He's been a Bear regular since.

Halas and Sternaman thought a lot of people would go see the Bears after they signed "Jumping" Joe Savoldi on

November 22. They believed his acquisition to be their greatest coup since they grabbed Grange. Certainly it brought them plenty of newspaper space, but unhappily he made his debut in zero weather and only 8,000 braved pneumonia to see him. What's more, the Bears drew a $1,000 fine from Joe Carr, the league president, for signing him.

It was an involved case. Under a ruling adopted after the Grange episode, the National League made all players ineligible for competition in the league until their college classes had been graduated. The catch in the Savoldi instance was that he had withdrawn from school before dealing with the Bears.

"Jumping" Joe was a sensation at fullback for Notre Dame on one of Knute Rockne's last and greatest teams. Opposing lines couldn't stop him, but Cupid could, and when the story broke that Savoldi was married in violation of the rules, he withdrew from the university.

"We did not directly nor indirectly solicit his services while he was in any way connected with Notre Dame," read a statement issued by Halas and Sternaman. "Because of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding this case we do not feel that we are making any encroachment upon college football, nor does this set any precedent of jeopardizing the amateur standing of any college player, as Savoldi is no longer classed as a college player."

The contract called for him to play the last four games of the season with the Bears, making his debut, as did Grange before him, on Thanksgiving Day. Financially the pro bow of the burly Italian star was anything but a bonanza, in large measure on account of the weather. In other respects it was better, for Joe scored a touchdown that gave the Bears a 6-to-0 victory over their traditional turkey day foes, the Cardinals. His scoring thrust, however, bridged a gap of only a foot or two and was definitely short of sensational.

The Cardinals made it their business to make the afternoon as unpleasant as possible for the highly touted Savoldi.

They drew a fifteen-yard penalty when George Kenneally, one of their ends, was detected aiming a fist in Joe's direction. One of the Cardinal players spoke Italian, and rather than become involved himself, coached a teammate in a few words and phrases to be directed toward Savoldi. The only thing Cardinal number two knew about Italian was how to order spaghetti and ravioli with perhaps some minestrone for a starter. Willingly, however, he mastered a few parrotings that he took to be friendly greetings. Actually the words he spoke to Savoldi that afternoon cast considerable reflection on his antecedents and wound up with an invitation for him to go someplace where the weather is consistently warmer.

Savoldi was hurt by these taunts and mad clear through. He was to carry the ball on the next play, but he was still sizzling inwardly, and besides, with only a few days of practice he didn't know his plays too well. The natural result was a fumble and a mad scramble from which Joe emerged with the ball and a cut lip. Later Savoldi had a hand in a major achievement—the Bears beat the Packers, 21 to 0, for the first time in three years.

They wound up their season with a 9-to-7 decision over the Cardinals in a freak game played in the Chicago Stadium for Governor Louis Emmerson's unemployment relief fund. The Stadium, an indoor arena fashioned along the general contours of New York's Madison Square Garden, is not large enough to house a regulation football field. The improvised gridiron was eighty yards long and forty-five yards wide, and under the rules governing the game a team had to march the regulation hundred yards in order to score. This concentrated a maximum of confusion into a minimum of space, so that no one ever was quite sure where the ball was. By all odds the best ball carrier of the night was Bobie Cahn, the referee.

The Bears' talent hunt for 1931 was not as productive as the one of the preceding year, but it brought in a choice bag that included two Illinois linemen, Ed Kawal and Lloyd

Burdick; tackle Jesse Hibbs of Southern California, and Art Bramhall, a fast halfback who was starring on Halas' Chicago Bruins basketball team. By all odds the biggest prize was the smallest one—Keith Molesworth, a little fellow from a little school, Monmouth College.

Any tackler who tried to catch him will agree that no one could field punts and return them as Moley could. He was good enough as a baseball player to operate at shortstop for Baltimore in the International League, and he'd grab a punt just as he would make a running catch on the diamond. He'd lay back, judging the arc of the ball perfectly, and time his start so that he'd be running full speed at the instant the ball settled into his arms. He'd catapult past tacklers before they could lay a hand on him, and on more than one occasion he bolted between two opponents with such explosive speed that he'd be gone on his merry way by the time they bumped their heads together tackling the atmosphere.

Moley was a dangerous open-field runner, an accurate punter, and a capable forward passer, being used essentially as a halfback, but he could quarterback the T formation effectively when Brumbaugh needed relief. He now directs the destinies of the Hawaiian league, having moved to the islands after years of service as backfield coach for the Naval Academy.

Herb Joesting, who preceded Nagurski as Minnesota's line-shattering fullback, joined the Bears in midseason of '31, and the club gradually gathered momentum to finish third behind Green Bay and Portsmouth. Most thrilling of their eight victories was one snatched from the Giants on the Polo Grounds with only twelve seconds remaining in the ball game. Garland Grange was the hero, taking a twenty-eight yard pass from Brumbaugh and running to pay dirt with it, but it was a hollow achievement inasmuch as the morning papers headlined: "Red Grange's Brother Beats Giants on Pass."

Gardie felt that was one time he earned something more personal in the way of recognition for his football ability.

CHAPTER 9

INDOOR FOOTBALL

THERE were skeptics who asked early in the 1932 football season, "Have the Bears any offense at all?"

All they had, of course, was the offense that eventually was to revolutionize the game, but it was just beginning to jell and still lacked the improvements and refinements that swept it to unprecedented popularity. In the early games of '32 the Bear machine sputtered like a wet firecracker. The team didn't lose; neither did it win consistently. For five games it didn't cross an opponent's goal line. Yet it won a championship, as Ralph Jones had promised it would when he signed his contract in '30. It won by winning seven games, losing one, and coming up with enough ties to stock the distant family relations at Christmas time—an even half dozen.

The rookie crop included everything imaginable from football's greatest end, Bill Hewitt, to a left-handed halfback who could throw a forward pass from behind his back. The latter was a muscular youngster who had come directly from the Milwaukee schools and sand lots without having had his mettle tested in the crucible of college football. His name was John Doehring, and the boys called him "Bull." Even Halas couldn't believe the evidence of his eyes when he first saw Doehring throw a football.

"I don't know how far he can throw," he evaded a reporter's question. "You don't expect me to be in two places at once, do you? I've seen him start the ball, but I've never seen it land!"

His formal unveiling was scheduled to take place in Boston against the Redskins and assume the form of the "doggonedest pass in football history." When the Bears dressed

for the game, however, Doehring was missing from the clubhouse. The first half came and went but still no Doehring. The second half also was completed without him, but when the players returned to the clubhouse after the game, in strolled Johnny and started to remove his clothes.

"What are you undressing now for?" someone asked.

"I'm going to take a shower," John retorted with logic.

"Where were you during the game?"

"In the stands, watching."

"But you were supposed to play. We planned to use you."

"I know," said John sadly, "but I got to thinking it over on the way to the park and decided maybe my mother wouldn't want me to play professionally."

This obstacle was quickly eliminated, Doehring agreed to play, and against Portsmouth cut loose with a long pass such as he never got around to throwing in Boston. On the play Doehring went in motion, and Brumbaugh tossed him a lateral. "Bull" then hesitated as long as possible before firing the ball downfield. Roy "Father" Lumpkin was in the safety position for the Spartans and stationed so far back that as Johnsos ran past him he laughed and asked, "Where in hell are you going?"

The laugh was on two other faces in a twinkling as Bull threw sixty-five yards to Johnsos for a touchdown. Doehring never threw the ball in a game as far as he could for the obvious reason that no one had time to run far enough down the field to catch it. In practice one day the Bears swear he sent a football careening through the air from one goal line to the opposite ten yard line—a ninety-yard pass.

Doehring wasn't one to take too seriously the drudgery of lectures, chalk talks, and the like. Johnsos still savors the look of astonishment on Halas' face when he asked why Bull had not attended a lecture one evening.

"George, you say the same things over and over," Doehring replied. "I went to a movie."

Along with Doehring and Hewitt, rookies reporting to

Coach Jones that fall included "Tiny" Engebretsen of Northwestern, Johnny Sisk of Marquette, "Ookie" Miller of Purdue, and George Corbett of Millikin. At the same time Joe Kopcha of Chattanooga began to develop into the stardom that won him a berth on the all-league team for three consecutive years. It is significant that Kopcha's rise was timed to accompany that of his good pal Hewitt, of whom more anon.

Of all the Bears it seems safe to assume that Kopcha alone was forced to bring his football talents into play in later life in pursuit of his profession. Dr. Joseph Kopcha, as resident obstetrician at a large metropolitan hospital, was assigned to an urgent home-delivery case. Grabbing up his hat and his kit, he jumped into his auto, and after violating a speed regulation or two, pulled in at the curb and sprinted up the sidewalk toward the house. Before he could reach the steps a burly figure blocked his path.

The expectant father had been staging a premature celebration and acquired a stubborn notion that Kopcha might harm his wife. He steadfastly refused to permit him to enter the house, and no amount of persuasion would melt his determination. So Joe took sterner methods. He launched himself in a superlative tackle, brought his fist into play once, and left the man snoozing peacefully while he went into the home and delivered the baby. Then he came out, revived the father, and went on about his business.

Kopcha was assured of a job with the Bears from the moment he reported, but with such a wealth of new men on hand, Halas hated to trim the squad to twenty. He solved the matter easily and quickly by arranging a telegraphic vote on a proposal to raise the league's player limit to twenty-two. It carried, and the Bears retained their full manpower.

The first game with the Packers was a scoreless tie, the second went to Green Bay by 2 to 0, when Tom Nash, Packer end, blocked a punt by Nesbitt and the ball rebounded out of the end zone for an automatic safety. For a

moment, later on, the Bears thought they had scored. They had punted, and Hewitt had fallen on the ball in the Green Bay end zone. He argued that the bounding ball had touched Rog Grove, the Packer safety, and that the Bears therefore were entitled to a touchdown. The officials turned deaf ears to his pleas, contending that Johnsos, not Grove, had touched the ball, and ruling the play a touchback with play resuming on the twenty yard line.

"Rocky" Wolfe, who ran the public address system in addition to serving as Bear publicity man, had been galloping down the side lines, dragging his microphone and cord, and was completely confused as to the proper ruling on the play. But he had to say something, so he blurted out, "The Bears scored a touchdown but the officials wouldn't allow it!"

Wolfe looked up then just in time to see Curly Lambeau and a big Packer guard charging him in high dudgeon. "Correction! Correction, folks!" said Rocky with a neat bit of footwork that would have done credit to a halfback. "That was a touchback!"

October 23 was a memorable date in '32 Bear history, for it was the day they scored their first touchdown in five National League games. Red Grange registered it on the sixth play following a fine twenty-yard punt return by Molesworth to the Stapleton thirty-one. Nesbitt got seven yards and followed with twelve, but then the attack developed another case of sputters. Nesbitt was held to a yard, Nagurski was stopped cold, and Grange got but a lone yard to the Stapes' ten yard line. Apparently sand had gotten into the scoring machinery again, but Moley removed it by passing to Grange in the end zone. That broke the tension, and the Bears went racing on to a 27-to-7 victory.

In the course of a 7-to-7 deadlock with Boston the Bears got to know Cliff Battles of West Virginia Wesleyan, one of the game's truly great ball carriers who was making his pro debut with the Redskins that day. All he did to annoy Jones's Bears was to score a touchdown on the receiving end of a

pass and carry the ball 24 times for 106 yards. At the end of the season Battles made a tour of the Pacific Coast with the Bears, but although he became a close friend of all of them, he continued to be the most implacable of enemies on the field through subsequent seasons.

Against what is traditionally the toughest defensive club in the league, the Giants, the Bears finally unlimbered the full power of their offense to take a surprise 28-to-8 game in New York. Seven seasons had elapsed since Grange had made his bow to the big city by catching a touchdown toss, but the passage of the years seemed to have wrought no untoward change, for this time Red was two touchdowns better. He caught three passes for scores.

A week later he was billed for what shaped up as a classic duel with Dutch Clark of Portsmouth at Wrigley Field, but it never materialized. Red slipped on the dressing-room stairs on his way to the field and twisted an ankle. Clark did his part by scoring both Spartan touchdowns in a 13-to-13 tie.

The Giants proved much more stubborn in a return match at Wrigley Field, but in the end they tripped over a shoestring and into a 6-to-0 defeat. The shoestring was an old, bewhiskered football trick so mildewed it caught the Giants napping. Johnsos simply dropped to one knee along the side line and pretended to be tying a shoelace. No one noticed his absence before Molesworth called a quick signal and cocked his arm to pass. By then it was too late. The ball arched cleanly into Luke's arms, and he scampered twenty-nine yards to the goal line.

The season's third meeting with the Packers was to decide whether Green Bay would be returned to the throne room as champions for the fourth consecutive year or the Bears were to tie with Portsmouth for the league leadership. The win would give the Bears and Spartans identical records of six wins and one defeat, tie games not figuring in the standings. The Packers, with but one tie, had won ten and lost two.

No football game ever was played under more miserable weather conditions. It was cold, and snow had fallen all the night before. Workmen had shoveled the field so that no more than an inch or two remained on the playing surface. Huge drifts were piled at the back of the end zones and on the side lines, completely obliterating the yard line markers. Every ten yards an effort had been made to mark lines across the field but these were soon lost in the blanket of white that kept sifting down from dark skies. The players, almost to a man, wore gloves or mittens, and once Nesbitt, kicking a punt from the end zone, stood knee-deep in drifts. Some five thousand candidates for a psychopathic ward jumped around in the stands trying to restore circulation to numb toes and kept coat collars up around their ears to prevent snow from blowing down their necks.

For three quarters neither team threatened seriously as they struggled to play good football against almost impossible odds. Thanks to the head lineman's chains, the officials could tell when a first down was recorded, but at no time was anyone absolutely sure just where on the field the ball happened to be. In the fourth quarter with the ball on the Green Bay fourteen yard line, Brumbaugh called for a field goal attempt. It seemed a foolhardy effort, but Brummy had asked "Tiny" Engebretsen, "Do you think you can make it?" and received a reply, "It'll go over." So from out of this arctic setting Engebretsen kicked a perfect placement for three points.

That was the ball game, although Nagurski later broke loose over the Green Bay right tackle and ran fifty-six yards to a touchdown to make the final score 9 to 0.

The weather throughout the next week was no better, and when the long-range forecast predicted bitter subzero cold for the following Sunday, it was decided to move the championship game with Portsmouth indoors to the Chicago Stadium, where, although the field would be short, neither the players nor spectators would be risking pneumonia. To make

the transfer possible, Bill Veeck, a humanitarian, released the Bears from their contract with the Cubs, which stipulated that all their games be played at Wrigley Field.

The concrete floor of the Stadium was covered with a thick layer of what Marty Doherty, the building superintendent, described as a "very swell brand of dirt." It had been spread for a Salvation Army benefit circus just closed and was well trampled down so that it afforded firm footing. This time it was decided to play the field as it lay, which meant a march of eighty yards would be good for a touchdown. This made it much easier for the spectators to follow the progress of play and eliminated the necessity of the head linesman operating with pencil, paper, and slide rule trying to determine where the ball rightfully should be were the field a regulation hundred yards in length.

The oddity of a football championship being decided on an undersized indoor field attracted a crowd of 11,198 and a gate of $15,000. This was not impressive, but it was far better than could have been done at Wrigley Field, for the weatherman made good his promise, and the mercury was doing its best to shove the bottom out of the thermometer. And one thing the intimate Stadium setting did accomplish —it convinced the fans that when these burly professionals hit one another, they hit hard. The impact of every vicious block and crashing tackle reverberated so startlingly the fans winced.

Portsmouth was severely handicapped by the absence of its star back, Dutch Clark, who was the keyman in their offense with his running, kicking, and passing to say nothing of his direction of the attack from his signal-calling position. Clark was basketball coach at his alma mater, Colorado College, and could not obtain leave of absence to play.

As three periods of the game ticked away without a point being scored, it appeared that the teams were on their way to their third tie of the year, their previous meetings having wound up even at 13 to 13 and 7 to 7. An intercepted pass by Nesbitt proved to be the break that was to settle the

championship. Dick stepped into the path of a pass thrown by Ace Gutowsky and came back with his peculiar swinging stride to the Portsmouth seven yard line.

The ball was close to the side line and under the special rules in force for this game was brought in fifteen yards without the loss of a down, which would have been suffered had the Bears been forced to waste a play going out of bounds and thus acquiring maneuvering space.

The mighty Nagurski hurled his vast bulk into the line and tore his way through a hole at left guard for six yards. Twice more he tried, and twice he was stopped as the Spartans, realizing the Bears would rely on the Bronk in this crisis, massed their defense to stop him at the line of scrimmage. Then came a play that, ere another season rolled around, was to bring a major change in the rules of the National Football League, a change that was to make the pro game the wide-open, high-scoring affair it is today.

Once again Nagurski started forward as though for a final despairing smack at the middle of the Spartan line. But this time, after taking the ball from quarterback Brumbaugh, the Bronk hesitated, backed up a couple of steps, and tossed a pass over the struggling pile at the line and into the hands of Grange for a touchdown.

Coach George "Potsy" Clark of the Spartans protested vehemently to the officials that the play was illegal. His contention was that Nagurski, at the time he threw the pass, was not five yards behind the line of scrimmage as the rules specified he should be. His arguments availed nothing, and when he had left the field, Engebretsen kicked the extra point with such emphasis that the ball bounced merrily about among the customers in the mezzanine. In the final moment of the game the Bears scored again when "Mule" Wilson fumbled a pass from center Clare Randolph and the ball rolled out of the end zone for a safety that brought the tabulation to 9 to 0. After eleven years the Bears were champions once more.

CHAPTER 10

THE GAME SPEEDS UP

PROFESSIONAL football began to come into its own in 1933, and three men destined to become the sport's most progressive leaders came into professional football. Consequently the National League had its full share of headlines long before a player had trotted out onto a field.

Halas, chairman of the rules committee, and George Marshall called the attention of the February meeting of club owners to a damaging fact—the league wasn't putting on good enough entertainment. They were in a form of show business, but where was the show? Football, as played by the professionals, was too drab, there wasn't enough dash and color, the emphasis was too patently on defense. The ten tie games played in the league in 1932 gave proof of that.

People didn't want to see tie games, argued Halas and Marshall. Fans who paid good money for a football game were entitled to see a winner emerge from it, if possible. They should be assured of some action, some scoring. The trick then was to increase the scoring. But how? The committee had the answers.

First and foremost, permit a forward pass to be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage instead of from a restraining line five yards farther back. That would open up the game like a pair of jacks in draw poker and produce more action. Countless offensive maneuvers could be designed to take full advantage of this new freedom, plays from which the opponent could only guess whether the ball carrier was going to run with the ball or throw it.

Secondly, the rules committee proposed, move the goal posts up ten yards from the back of the end zone and plant them

on the goal lines, where they had been in the early days of the sport. Such a move would bring a marked increase in field-goal kicking, which was rapidly becoming a lost art, and would make the scoring of the point after touchdown much easier. Tie games would soon vanish if the foot was put back into football again.

The truth of this contention and the wisdom of the league in adopting the changes was borne out by the statistics of the '33 season, which saw the number of ties cut exactly in half, from ten to five. The Bears, who had struggled to six deadlocks in '32, played only one the following year, and that was a 3-to-3 game with Philadelphia in which all points were scored by placement kicks, thus proving the rules committee's argument that moving the goal posts would stimulate kicking. Further evidence in support of the Halas group was found in the Bears' own backfield, where Jack Manders began rolling up field goals and points after touchdown at a record clip.

Of even greater importance in the shaping of professional football into the colorful scoring spectacle it is today was the legalizing of forward passes thrown from any point behind the line. It made football coaches and fans air-minded as thoroughly as the commercial air lines were doing with their tremendous strides in speed, safety, and passenger comfort. The forward pass became the greatest scoring weapon in football and brought myriad changes to both offense and defense.

The Bears were the first to take full advantage of it, because in Nagurski they had the ideal player to set it up as a definite threat. The team's most consistent ground-gaining and scoring play for the next two years was a fake plunge into the line by big Bronk, followed by his jump basketball pass over the middle of the line. To this Hewitt added the extra fillip of tossing a lateral pass after catching the forward. Because of the Bronk's tremendous driving power, the opponents couldn't afford to weaken their defense against his line

plunges, yet if they didn't, he'd throw the ball over their heads for an even longer gain.

The extraordinary effectiveness of this play was made doubly clear by the scoring pass Nagurski had pitched to Grange to win the title game with Portsmouth. The Bronk had backed up after his fake that time, but the pass worked to perfection anyway. How much better it was now that he could carry out his fake to the limit.

The Spartans have never been fully convinced that Bronko was a legal five yards behind the line when he threw the pass that beat them. After the players left the field on their way to the dressing rooms in the Stadium basement that night, "Ox" Emerson, Spartan guard, paused at the bar to gulp a glass of water and to rant at a group of sports writers. He was bruised and tired and mad, and rivulets of sweat, augmented by a tear or two, traced tiny gullies through the dirt that caked his face.

"He wasn't five yards back of the line!" Emerson mumbled over and over like a cracked phonograph record. "It was an illegal play! He wasn't five yards back!"

What the Nagurski jump pass meant to the Bears was attested in their early games. Whereas they hadn't scored a touchdown in their first five league games of '32, they shoved across six in '33.

Two other rule changes also were adopted that season, one to speed play and open the game, the other to reduce the number of injuries. To effect the latter the penalty for clipping was increased from fifteen to twenty-five yards, and to streamline the play it was voted to move the ball ten yards into the field of play whenever it was downed within five yards of the side line.

These actions were taken at the February meeting, but the July session brought even more drastic changes in the league's personnel and operational plans. Now that the league had shaken down into a compact group of seemingly permanent members, with five teams in the west and five in the east, it

was decided to divide the league into two divisions with the Bears, Portsmouth, Cincinnati, Green Bay, and Chicago Cardinals representing the west, and the eastern cities being New York, Brooklyn, Boston, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. That is roughly the alignment that has been maintained ever since. Washington now holds the old Boston franchise in the east with Boston filling Brooklyn's notch. The Portsmouth club was transferred to Detroit. Cleveland and later Los Angeles became the fifth western city after Cincinnati dropped out.

With the league thus split for geographical reasons it was decided that a champion should be determined for each division, the two winners to meet in a postseason play-off for the league championship. The Bears were involved in the first two play-offs, winning one and losing one, and have represented the west a total of eight times in the fourteen play-off years, winning on five of those occasions. Many of those games, especially the first one, have been thrillers, and in 1940 the Bears established a scoring record by crushing Washington under the unbelievable championship score of 73 to 0.

The July meeting also brought into the National Football League three new club owners who played important roles in the skyrocketing boom the game soon was to enjoy—Charles W. Bidwill, Arthur J. Rooney, and Bert Bell, now league commissioner. Bell and Lud Wray, coach of the Redskins, were awarded the old Frankford A. C. franchise and moved it a few miles to Philadelphia. Rooney acquired the Pittsburgh club, and Bidwill purchased the Cardinals from Dr. David J. Jones.

Rooney quickly discovered that a football magnate had to be as alert as one of his players on the field. His Pittsburgh club was scheduled to play Portsmouth at Cleveland late in his first season, but a blizzard made the playing of the game an impossibility. When Rooney approached the Portsmouth officials in search of his guarantee, which at that time was

$2,500, he was put off with these words: "I'm sorry, Art. We don't have the money, but I'll give you Presnell." Glen Presnell, former Nebraska halfback, was one of the league's most dangerous all-round performers. Rooney was happier over the prospect of getting Presnell than he would have been with the $2,500, but he completely neglected to register the deal with Joe Carr, the league president. Consequently, when the Portsmouth franchise was sold to G. A. Richards of Detroit the following June, Presnell went along as part of the property. That very fall he established a distance record for field-goal kicking, booting a placement of fifty-four yards to beat Green Bay, 3 to 0.

Bidwill, who had saved the Bears for Halas by arranging a loan earlier in the year, was a rabid Bear fan and remained so, even after he owned the Cardinals, until shortly before his sudden and untimely death in the spring of 1947 when fans began to predict his Cardinals were the team that would end the Bears' domination of western football. It took all his strength of will not to root for "that Halas" and the Bears when they were playing the Cards.

"I'm getting over it," he confessed after the Cardinals had beaten the champion Bears in the last game of the regular schedule of '46. "I knew it when I saw Marshall Goldberg score that last touchdown. That Halas can put me down alongside Lambeau, Owen, and Marshall [his most persistent rivals] right now."

Bidwill came into control of the Cardinals quite unexpectedly at a dinner party aboard his yacht. In the course of the evening he aimed a casual question at Dr. Jones: "Want to sell your football club?" Dr. Jones agreed that he would if he could get his price, which seemed doubtful in a year of deep financial depression.

"What's your price?" asked Bidwill. "Fifty thousand dollars," replied the doctor. Nothing more was said. A couple of days later Charley phoned Dr. Jones. "It's a deal," he said.

Year after year, from that point on, Charley Bidwill cheered

for the Bears and lost money with his Cardinals. People used to ask him why he poured money, time, and strength into the Cardinals, and he had a ready reply: "A guy has to have some fun. Besides, a lot of my pals never went to college, and the Cardinals are their alma mater."

To combat the threat of the new All America Football Conference to the National League, Bidwill and Halas entered into an agreement that they would not permit their top name players in the pro's draft of college seniors to join the rival league. In consequence, on successive days in the winter of 1946–47 and to the popping of photographers' flash bulbs and a few corks, Chicago was treated to two elaborate ceremonies. First Bidwill signed Charley Trippi, Georgia's great All-American and the year's most sought-after player; next Halas signed Bob Fenimore, sensational back from Oklahoma A. and M.; then Halas and Bidwill shook hands solemnly.

All the to-do attendant upon the introduction of these two youngsters to the Chicago sports scene brought a chuckle to the lips of Luke Johnsos. "Why," he grinned, "Halas signed me on a fire escape in the dark of night. Now look—he throws a party when he signs a player!"

The manner in which he obtained Trippi probably gave Bidwill more real enjoyment than any other one thing in his association with football. He had known Trippi for a long time and was sincerely fond of him. This bond of affection was mutual, which is why Bidwill was the only National Leaguer unperturbed when the New York Yankees of the All America Conference, rival league that came into being in '46, dangled their bank roll before the young athlete.

"Stop worrying," Bidwill admonished his friends. "I'm not worried, and Trippi isn't worried. He's a Cardinal, I tell you!"

His heartiest laugh came on New Year's Day, 1947, when the Yankees sent their representatives hot on Trippi's trail to New Orleans, where he was playing with Georgia in the Sugar Bowl game.

The phone rang in Trippi's hotel room. The caller was the Yankees' agent.

"I'd like to talk to Charley Trippi," he said.

"You'll have to speak to his lawyer," he was told. "Just a moment, I'll call him."

The Yankee representative talked at length with the lawyer, painting a glowing picture of the benefits to be derived from joining the new league and the Yankees, of the exceptional opportunity afforded by the Yanks' offer of a combination baseball and football career, Trippi being a star on the diamond as well as on the gridiron.

"You know who Trippi's lawyer was, don't you?" Bidwill chortled later. "It was me! Imagine those guys trying to sell Trippi to me!"

Fate dealt likable, loyal, enthusiastic Charley Bidwill a cruel blow when it decreed he should not live to see Trippi wear the Cardinal uniform and maybe wrest a championship from the Bears.

But back in 1933 after Bidwill got into football by rescuing the Bears and purchasing the Cardinals, Halas found himself head of a corporation and with a championship team on his hands. It was his job now to make sure the Bears remained in championship brackets. The task, tough enough at best, was complicated by the resignation of Ralph Jones. The man who had built the Bears into football's top team and who had laid the groundwork for the T formation that was soon to sweep the country, stepped out of the professional field to accept the post as director of athletics at Lake Forest College, a position he still holds.

The news of Jones's resignation had hardly hit the streets in newspaper headlines when a flood of applications for the job began to roll in across Halas' desk. College coaches, high-school coaches, former pro stars—all wanted to try their luck at directing the mighty Bears for the 1933 season. Aside from a tremendous number of interested inquiries, Halas received twenty-seven formal applications, fifteen from coaches then

actually under contract to leading colleges and universities.

None presented exactly the qualifications Halas wanted in his coach. One or two men whom he would have accepted as Bear coach were tied to college contracts and would not or could not break them. So on August 30 Halas announced that he would coach the team himself—"but for this year only!"

"By next season," his announcement read, "one of the three college coaches I have been seeking will be available."

Perhaps he was available. No one will ever know, for Halas has never revealed who the three coaches were. But anyhow he didn't get the job. Halas' coaching tenure of "this year only" turned out to be a permanent lease. Coach Halas has worked for owner Halas exclusively ever since except for a time-out period during the war.

When he took over the job, Halas made a significant remark: "It is my intention," he said, "to formulate an offense for the team to take full advantage of our power, speed, and exceptional forward-passing ability."

Those have been the watchwords of the Bears through the years. The offense began to roll with Nagurski and the jump pass; it gathered momentum season after season until a decade later it was being mimicked the country over.

CHAPTER 11

PAY-OFF PLAY-OFF

THE coach wasn't the only thing new about the Bears of 1933, for Halas had surrounded himself with a splendid array of veterans augmented by some rookies whose names were to be associated with the club for many years—Roy "Link" Lyman, Ray Richards, Gene Ronzani, Joe Zeller, Bill Karr, George Musso, Jack Manders. There also was a lean Texan named Charley Malone who didn't stick around long with the Bears but who cropped up later to cause them many unhappy moments as one of the league's finest ends as a member of the Washington Redskins.

Lyman, although in his mid-thirties, was still far from through. He had a surprising turn of speed for a man carrying 250 pounds on a six-foot two-inch frame. He frequently was first down the field under punts, he was an iron man at tackle, and although he was regarded as a sort of father-confessor by the younger players, he was the life of the party on road trips, his strong, rich baritone drowning out all other voices in happy-go-lucky songfests.

"Link" had broken into professional football with Canton eleven years before, playing there in '22 and with Cleveland in '23. The next season he pooled resources with three others to purchase the franchise and move the team back to Canton. He joined the Bears in '25 but remained out of the game in '29 to run a semipro team in Texas and again in '32 to operate his ranch in Nebraska. His urge to smack down a few more ball carriers, plus Halas' Lorelei voice, combined to lure him back to active participation in '33 and '34.

Zeller, former University of Indiana lineman, had played with Green Bay the previous season, his first as a pro, and

had distinguished himself by being about the only man in the league able to tackle Nagurski and bring him to earth consistently. Men who could stop Nagurski, naturally, were more useful to Halas on the Bears where they'd be helping instead of hindering him.

Ronzani, a chunky, black-haired firebrand from Marquette, made himself so useful over the years as a fullback, halfback, quarterback, forward passer, punter, strategist, and coaching aid that he still is a member of the Bear organization. He not only operated their original farm club at Newark when the Bears set out to imitate the St. Louis Cardinals' baseball chain-store system, he later ran the Akron, Ohio, club, and he returned during the war years to show the younger generation how a quarterback should function in the T. Burdened with years and excess poundage, he still was about the best man on the field until he tired.

If there is one thing Gene still enjoys more than football it is life in the outdoors. He's an incurable hunter, a passion that for a time had the coaches worried.

One snowy morning in November, to save marring the surface of Wrigley Field where a game was scheduled for Sunday, the Bears were working out in Lincoln Park. As the squad snapped through signal drill, Halas was chatting about Ronzani's all-round value. "I wouldn't trade Gene for anyone in the league," he vowed, "but sometimes I think I'm wrong. Look at him over there. Just look at him, would you. Tracking sparrows in the snow."

Halas cupped his hands and shouted, "Hey, Frank Buck, what do you do on seventy-one-thirty to the left?"

"Go for a touchdown," shot back Ronzani without so much as looking up from the tracks he was following.

The Bears did their advance training that fall of '33 at South Bend, to facilitate the publicity build-up for their exhibition game with a group of former Notre Dame players coached by "Hunk" Anderson. The game, played in the mud at Soldier Field as part of the sports program of the Chicago

Century of Progress exposition, went to the Bears by 14 to 0.

Thanks to the exposition the Bears had in camp a slim young athlete named Bill Karr, and because of the fair they nearly lost one of the best ends in football.

Karr had been a three-sport man at the University of West Virginia, from which he had graduated with a degree in chemistry. He planned to continue his studies for a master's degree in education and so wasn't too interested in an offer received from the Bears. However, he did want to see the Century of Progress, so he borrowed some money from his father and headed for Chicago. He found the fair even better than he had anticipated, and the pulsating life of the city fascinated him. When his money finally ran low, he made arrangements to return home, but at the very last moment changed his mind and decided to report to the Bears. He was sure he wasn't good enough to make the team, but it might be fun to try out and stick around until he was cut from the roster.

In the early practice scrimmages he was a tremendous disappointment even to himself. At end for the reserves, he found himself called upon to stop Ronzani, whose path was being smoothed by Nagurski as blocker from the single wing. Karr never succeeded in stopping Ronzani, for the simple reason that he never touched him. Nagurski would barrel into the lighter Karr and with one upsweep of his forearm send him spinning out of the way while Ronzani raced past.

Karr was slated for early dismissal and might have been back with his test tubes and formulas almost overnight had it not been for "Tarzan" Taylor's bump of curiosity. Taylor dropped in on the Bear camp one day to watch practice. He liked Karr's actions but was puzzled at his lack of effectiveness.

"There's something wrong with that boy," he told Halas, and forthwith set out with typical Taylor directness to find out what the trouble was.

The camp training table was still two years in the future,

the players of '33 eating at whatever restaurant or lunch counter suited their taste and pocketbook. Karr's difficulty, Taylor discovered, was that his pocketbook was flat. Bill had spent almost all of his money at the fair and was trying to play football on a diet of hamburgers.

"Feed him," was the advice "Tarz" gave the coach. Halas promptly advanced Karr money, and with some thick juicy steaks under his belt the youngster began to play football. Hewitt took Karr under his wing, and before the season was half over, the greatest all-round end of history was pointing to Karr and declaiming, "There's the best young end I ever saw. Give him another year and nobody can touch him. He'll be in a class by himself."

Karr stepped in as regular right end in midseason when Johnsos broke an ankle, and held the job until he retired. Each fall, however, he'd look over the crop of rookie ends fearfully and wonder how he could hope to win out against such talent.

Karr didn't see much action in the first league game against Green Bay. None of the rookies did for that matter, for this was the game that the Bears pulled out of the fire with two touchdowns in the last two minutes on the machinations of Hewitt, Johnsos, Manders, and Brumbaugh. The play that turned it upside down—the Hewitt end-around followed by a forward pass to Johnsos or Karr—was to prove a potent scoring weapon all season.

For a brief span of less than ten minutes that afternoon in Green Bay there appeared in the Bear line a tremendous young man who resembled an ambulatory block of granite. After the first play his shirttail was out and flying in the wind, even as it was destined to be for the next decade.

The young giant's name was George Musso, he came from George Millikin University, and he weighed 260 pounds, so no imagination is required to discover the source of his nickname, "Moose."

"Moose," an unheralded player from a small school, had

been a sensation in the preseason east-west game in Chicago, but he was far short of sensational against the Packers. Indeed, his debut as a Bear came near to being his swan song as well.

Halas planned to hand him his release following that game and told him so, but relented when Musso got Curly Lambeau on the phone and was told that the Packers would sign him gladly. Musso, however, didn't want to play with Green Bay. He preferred to remain with the Bears, for he had taken an apartment with Nagurski and George Corbett and was happy in this association.

The Bears were heading east at once for games at Boston and Brooklyn, and Halas finally agreed to take Musso along at half salary. "Moose" jumped at the chance to remain with his pals and played such terrific football in both games that the half-salary arrangement was forgotten. He was paid in full.

Following these first three victories, the Bears, already strong in the line, were bolstered still more by the addition of Dick Stahlman, a veteran of many pro campaigns and a member of the great Giant team that won the '27 championship. Stahlman was and is a Chicago policeman but was granted a furlough for a farewell fling at the gridiron.

The Cardinals were next, and for the third time in four games the Bears staged a fourth-quarter rally to win. This time they trailed 9 to 0 at half time, but got back into the contest when that Hewitt-to-Johnsos sleeper caught the Redshirts napping. Manders' extra point and a safety tied it up. Then, as the final minutes ticked away, Manders booted a field goal from twenty yards to make the score 12 to 9.

"The storybook Bears," the newspapers were calling them now, and they lived up to the appellation by snatching a 10-to-7 thriller from the Packers after trailing 7 to 0 at the end of the third period. A lateral pass from Molesworth to Grange followed by a forward pass to Johnsos in the end zone gave the Bears their first score. Two minutes remained to play when Hinkle's punt was partially blocked and recovered by

the Bears on their forty-three yard line. The Packers expected a desperation pass, but the Bears fooled them and sent Manders bolting through the line for twenty-seven yards. Three plays later Jack kicked a field goal from the thirty yard line.

There was time only for the kickoff before the final gun sounded. But before the clubs lined up for the kickoff, Brumbaugh, acting captain for the Bears, went up to the Green Bay field leader, big Cal Hubbard.

"What do you want to do?" he asked.

Hubbard turned a weary, dirty, woebegone face toward Brummy. "I want to quit," he mourned.

More fourth-quarter fireworks salvaged a 14-to-10 victory over the Giants at Wrigley Field, Johnsos touching them off by blocking a punt and breaking his leg in the attempt. The loss of Johnsos didn't bother Hewitt one whit, for once more he pulled the old end-around and pitched a pass to Karr for the touchdown. It was the first act of a juggling duet that was going to drive a dozen defenses crazy in the next few seasons.

Two defeats and a tie on the road rubbed some of the Frank Merriwell aura from the Bears. Boston and the Giants administered the defeats by 10 to 0 and 3 to 0, and the Eagles were tied 3 to 3 in the first Sunday athletic contest held in Philadelphia following the repeal of the blue laws that had been in effect for 139 years. That game, incidentally, attracted 17,850 to the Phillies' ball park, Baker Bowl.

The week following the New York reversal Nagurski butted his head into the dugout bricks to defeat Portsmouth, 17 to 14, and spent the night in a hospital nursing a wrenched back and a lump on the head. Victories over the Cardinals, Portsmouth, and the Packers then sent the Bears into the first championship play-off as representatives of the Western Division. The Giants carried the banner of the East.

The game, played with a wet ball on a slippery field at the Cubs' ball park, kept a crowd of 26,000 on their feet for four nerve-racking quarters. It was one of the most thrilling

contests of that or any year. The lead changed hands six times before the Bears won 23 to 21; Harry Newman completed ten of eleven forward passes, seven of them in a row on two touchdown marches; Manders kicked three field goals, one of them of forty yards; the game ended with Grange tackling the ball to prevent a lateral pass that would have meant a certain New York touchdown.

For all this each Bear drew $210.34 from the players' pool as the winner's share, and each Giant pocketed $140.22 as solace.

The game was so unusual that a run-down of the scoring is in order. The first period produced only a sixteen-yard field goal by Manders, who added another from forty yards early in the second quarter. The Giants bounced back for a touchdown in four plays, Newman passing to Morris "Red" Badgro for the score and Ken Strong converting to make the Giants' margin 7 to 6 at the half.

An incident took place in the first half that should have warned the fans of the frantic, furious, and fantastic shape the game was to assume later. Mel Hein, center who enjoyed fourteen years of stardom for the Giants, almost ran for a touchdown from scrimmage!

The Giants had possession of the ball close to the side line and lined up with only one man to Hein's left on the line of scrimmage. A back was stationed far to the right about three steps back. Just before the ball was snapped, the back jumped up on the line of scrimmage, and the lineman at Hein's left dropped back, placing the center at the end of the line where he became eligible as a ball carrier.

Newman, crouched under center, faked as though he had taken the ball from Hein, but actually handed it back to the center, who cradled it in his hands in such a way it was concealed from the Bears by the spread of his pants seat. Spinning while stooped over, Newman took a few backward steps and fell, feigning a fumble. Hein meanwhile straightened up, and concealing the ball as best he could, began to saunter

with a somewhat hurried walk toward the Bear goal. The strategy might have worked, for Hein had passed all but one of the Bears without detection, but when he spotted the Bear safety man he automatically began to run. Seeing Hein break into a run, the safety man caught onto the ruse and brought him down after a gain of about fifteen yards.

Manders' toe was brought into play in the third period to restore the Bears to the lead, 9 to 7, but five Newman passes put the ball on the one yard line from where Max Krause scored. Strong converted, and it was 14 to 9, Giants. Three minutes later the Bears were back in the van by 16 to 14 on a pass from Nagurski to Karr and Manders' extra point.

Newman began pitching strikes again, hitting his receivers three times in succession for fifty-nine yards. Strong varied the procedure by picking up fourteen yards through the line, then Newman took to the air and sent Dale Burnett to the eight yard line on the final play of the third quarter.

What happened next can never be found in the Giants' file of plays. It was the product of on-the-spot thinking, split-second reaction, and football intuition flavored perhaps with a dash of luck. The play began with Strong starting wide to his left, but he was trapped and apparently about to be thrown for a loss. Before the tacklers could down him, however, he shot a lateral to Newman.

Newman was to one side and behind the play, standing for all the world like a man waiting for a streetcar. Obviously startled as the ball came his way, he juggled it momentarily as though someone had suddenly handed him a red-hot rivet. Then he reversed his field in a magnificent dodging, twisting run, and just as two Bears hurled themselves on him, he threw the ball in the general direction of the goal line.

When that ball came down, who should be there to catch it but Strong, the man who had it in the first place! Ken simply fell over the line, kicked the point a moment later, and the Giants led, 21 to 16.

A punt exchange followed by a pass from Molesworth to

Brumbaugh carried to the Giant thirty-six yard line. Nagurski picked up four yards at the center of the line. Once again he drove forward toward the line, but before he reached it, he leaped and tossed a short lob pass to Hewitt, who had cut over behind the Giant line from his position at left end. Hewitt took no more than two or three steps as the Giants' secondary closed in on him, but flipped the ball laterally to Karr, who grabbed it on the run and headed down the right side line. The only man between him and the goal was Strong, and Ronzani removed him with a block so vicious and resounding it all but knocked the Giant halfback into the stub left-field bleachers where Hack Wilson pumped his home runs in the summer.

"That's the kick I get out of this game," grinned Ronzani later, "smacking the ears off 'em."

After he had "smacked the ears off" Strong, Karr cakewalked to a touchdown, and Manders kicked the point to bring the score to 23 to 21, Bears. But although the score had reached its final status, the game still packed a closing thrill. In the very last seconds of play Newman passed down the middle to Burnett. It was good for twenty-eight yards. As he ran Burnett found Hein alongside and only Grange barring their path to victory. If he could wait until Grange made a move to tackle him, then toss a lateral to Hein, nothing could prevent a Giant victory.

Happily Grange, a great defensive back in his late years, knew this too, and he reacted so quickly that the Giant was trapped. Red tackled high, wrapping his arms around Burnett's so he couldn't move them. The lateral was never thrown, the gun sounded, and the Bears were still champions.

Right then Chicago fans began to hope that owner Halas would not see fit to fire coach Halas the next autumn. He didn't.

CHAPTER 12

THE BRONK

THE train carrying, among others, the Pittsburgh team of the National Football League, was lurching around mountain bends at high speed. In a Pullman section a group of players were playing cards, and as usual, the game had attracted its full share of kibitzers. They were perched on the arms of the seats, standing in the aisle, and kneeling on adjoining seats to peer over the heads of the active participants.

Conversational accompaniment to the slap-slap of the cards was devoted to the Chicago Bears. Suddenly the train gave an unusually violent lurch. Cards and kibitzers landed in a heap in the aisle. Above the din rose the voice of Warren Heller, halfback from the University of Pittsburgh.

"Run for your lives, men," he cried. "Nagurski!"

That is but a sample of the awe in which rival players held Bronko Nagurski, the Bears' massive fullback and one of the greatest football players of all time.

Pittsburgh had particular reason to recall Nagurski with dread. On successive plays in a game a few weeks earlier Pittsburgh players had attempted to tackle the Bronk after he had built up a full head of steam. Both tacklers were carried off the field with broken shoulders.

"There was something strange about tackling Nagurski," Red Grange recalls. "When you hit him it was almost like getting an electric shock. If you hit him above the ankles, you were likely to get killed."

"The guy could have been an All-American at eleven positions," says Dr. Clarence Spears. And Doc should know, for it was he who brought this young giant out of the northland.

Nagurski was the Babe Ruth of football. No one ever hit

so hard or for greater distance. He was still the irresistible force when, after six years of retirement, he came back for a glorious valedictory with the Bears when the war had left them shorthanded in 1943.

Bronko is not a nickname. He was so christened by his Ukrainian parents shortly after his birth on November 3, 1908, at Rainy River, Ontario, some sixty miles from International Falls, Minnesota, where he was first to make his unique name a newspaper byword.

At fifteen he weighed 180 pounds and was as strong as the burliest mill hand. Yet, oddly enough, his high-school team didn't win a game during his two years of competition with International Falls. Consequently, when he enrolled at the University of Minnesota, he was just one of many big strong kids from the north country that had made the Gophers synonymous with football power. He didn't remain a nonentity long.

Doc Spears had devised a special off-tackle play for use against Michigan. He gave the varsity the ball and summoned Nagurski and his frosh teammates.

"Get in there and stop this play," he ordered. The freshmen took him at his word. They held the varsity time after time. Then Spears gave the ball to the freshmen. On the first play Nagurski shot through the line for three yards. He took the ball again, and again he gained. This went on until the varsity was convinced he couldn't be stopped. Word quickly spread around the Minnesota campus that the team had another Joesting. Herb Joesting was their All-American fullback.

The next summer Spears was telling the press of a young sophomore he would unveil that autumn.

"I don't know where I'll play him," he said. "He's a big tough kid who could pretty nearly be an All-American wherever I used him. His name is Nagurski, and he comes from International Falls, where the mercury drops out of the thermometer. And you know what? That kid is so tough he doesn't even wear a coat!"

But the Bronk wasn't going to start carrying footballs right away. He started the opening game in 1927 against North Dakota at right end. But tackle was the team's weak point, so the Bronk moved to tackle. Before he finished his span of collegiate competition he was to play every position except center, halfback, and quarterback.

An All-American in any position? In 1929 he was named tackle on the All-America, yet he played only twenty minutes at tackle during the Western Conference season. The rest of the time he was ripping opposing lines to shreds as a fullback.

Nagurski's forte was power. He stood six feet two inches and weighed 230 pounds when he came to the Bears, with massive treelike legs developed when he was a kid running from home to school. Yet these huge legs also were charged with a surprising turn of speed.

At Minnesota he was unable to compete in any sport but football, but he was ready to represent the Sigma Chi fraternity in an annual track meet. In a bit of fraternity-house horseplay, Harold "Shorty" Almquist derided him for entering the dashes. The Bronk similarly scoffed at Almquist for entering the hammer throw, an event for he-men exclusively.

To the consternation of all, Nagurski won the hundred-yard dash, defeating Almquist and several other speedsters, including Fred Hovde, now president of Purdue University. Then, to Bronk's everlasting embarrassment, Almquist beat him in the hammer throw!

The acquisition of Nagurski for the Bears was Halas' greatest coup since he hired Healy to save his own hide and purchased Driscoll to ward off the Bulls' challenge to a Bear market.

Halas contacted Nagurski first through friends, then by telephone, and finally Bronk paid a visit to Chicago. He started home by train, unsigned, for he had insisted on a two-year contract for $10,000 in preference to the Bears' offer of $5,000 for a single season. At a station stop he was handed a telegram agreeing to his terms and requesting immediate

confirmation. Bronk dashed off his acceptance and handed it to the telegraph operator.

Awaiting him on his arrival home was an offer from the New York Giants for $7,500 for one year's play.

Nagurski's first game with the Bears was against their old rivals, the Packers. But let Grange tell about it, for it's a story he loves.

"We were playing at Green Bay. Big Cal Hubbard [now an American League baseball umpire] was playing tackle for the Packers, and Cal was big and fast and really tough. He wasn't a fellow you'd pick for an argument.

"Well, the Bronk and I were on one side to protect our punter. Bronk was the deep blocker, close to the kicker.

"The game was getting along when Hubbard passed me and said, 'Next time the Bears kick, let me by. I'll guarantee I won't block the kick. I just want to get a shot at that Nagurski. I've been hearing how hard he is, and I want a crack at him.'

"So the next time the Bears punted, I let Hubbard go past me, and then I turned around to watch. Cal hit Bronk and bounced. He caught up with me as we ran down the field.

" 'That's enough,' Hubbard muttered. 'He's just as hard as they said!' "

Nagurski's greatest "bumping" matches always developed in the Green Bay games, especially those played at Green Bay. And they usually were with his great rival Clarke Hinkle, the Packers' sterling fullback whose only mistake was to enter professional football at the same time as the Bronk.

In 1933 Hinkle won a clear-cut decision. The two collided head on like two runaway locomotives and with roughly the same result. Hinkle's headgear smacked Nagurski full in the face, and the indestructible Bronk was led away with a broken nose.

In Wrigley Field in Chicago they met again the next year. Now the Bronk had a habit, when a rival back broke through the Bear line, of meeting him with a tremendous, jolting

body block instead of a clean tackle. It customarily knocked the runner back several yards and not infrequently led to fumbles.

The ball was near mid-field in the Packers' possession, and Hinkle hurled himself through a tiny hole in the Bear line just inside George Musso, the 260-pound tackle. Nagurski, sensing the play, met Hinkle before the hole closed with one of those copyright blocks. Hinkle rebounded a good five yards, landed with his feet still churning, regained his balance, and sped back through the hole for a long touchdown run.

"It's the first time," laughed Musso later, "that I ever saw a back go past me three times on a single play."

Not many minutes after that run of Hinkle's the Bears worked the ball to the Packer thirty-five yard line, and the Bronk drove over left tackle. He never looked up, just trampled three would-be tacklers, stormed over the goal line, and crashed into the brick wall of the grandstand.

His first words after Andy Lotshaw's cold towels had brought him around were: "Who in hell hit me?"

Later in the clubhouse he told Halas, "I just had to make that one, George. Why, that lapse of mine might have cost us the ball game."

Against Portsmouth in 1933 the Bears were battling for a place in the championship play-offs, which had been inaugurated that fall. They were nursing a three-point lead late in the fourth quarter, and the margin seemed perfectly safe when the Spartans were forced to make a fourth-down punt that Keith Molesworth returned to mid-field. But Nagurski was detected holding Harry Ebding, Portsmouth end, on the play, the penalty being five yards and an automatic first down for the Spartans. On the next play Glen Presnell passed sixty-five yards to Ernie Caddel for a touchdown. Portsmouth led, 14 to 10, with a few seconds less than two minutes to play.

The kickoff went where the Spartans didn't intend, straight to Nagurski, who came charging back to the Bear forty-five

yard line. Tears were on the giant's cheeks as he came into the huddle.

"Fellows, this is all my fault," he blurted. Then, coldly, "Brummy, give me that ball!"

Quarterback Brumbaugh complied with a shovel pass that sent Bronk thundering around the Spartan right end. Down the muddy field along the side line he charged like a mad bull, tacklers flying off him like mud from his cleats. When he crossed the goal line, he was going so fast he zoomed headlong into the dugout at the south end of Wrigley Field. Groundkeepers still maintain there's a dent in the bricks where he hit. Since that memorable afternoon, the dugout has been boarded up during football season.

James T. Gallagher, general manager of the Chicago Cubs, who, as a sports writer, was one of the early boosters for professional football, caught the essence of the Bronk's mad gallop in these words: "Those who were unlucky got in his way. Those who were lucky got out of it. The only thing that could stop him was a brick wall."

"Nagurski is seventy-five per cent of an opposing team's worries," declared Harry Newman, the old Michigan star, while he was quarterbacking the New York Giants. "I was never hit so hard in my life as one time when I tried to bring him down.

"It was the fourth period, he started on our thirty-two yard line, and I met him halfway. I hit him as hard as I could, and all I did was throw him off his pace a little, not nearly enough to stop him. He kept on going to the twelve yard line where Dale Burnett nailed him. Burnett was picked up, dazed and mumbling something about coming in contact with a pile driver."

Nagurski was seldom injured. Or if he was hurt, the trainers seldom knew about it, for he wouldn't tell them. In 1928 at Minnesota he played with a steel brace to protect an injured spine—and carried the ball three consecutive times to put over the winning touchdown.

He was stopped only once—by a streptococcus infection. It settled in his hip and sciatic nerve late in the 1935 season, but it couldn't keep him down. He played brilliantly through the final three games, although each step was agony, and he had to be assisted to his feet after every play.

As a result of this infection a bony spur developed on his hip, and surgery was required to remove it the next summer.

While undergoing treatment for the sciatic condition, Nagurski was spending one of his infrequent mornings on Lotshaw's rubbing table. It was the occasion of quite a gathering of players, who promptly took up the old pastime of poking fun at the trainer over his inability to remember names.

"I'll bet you a hundred bucks," said halfback Johnny Sisk, "that you can't name half the football players on this club."

Lotshaw caught up the challenge eagerly. "It's a bet!" he agreed, chortling. "I can name you *every* football player on this club. Yes, sir, all three of them!"

Nagurski laughed so hard he tumbled off the table. And the heckling was over.

By his own confession his greatest thrill always came from blocking for another ball carrier. In 1934 when Beattie Feathers set an all-time ground-gaining record of 1,004 yards in 101 tries, he did so by latching onto the Bronk like a tail. And once Bronk had cleared away the first of the enemy, Feathers was off for a substantial gain.

When Nagurski himself carried the ball, he seldom had much interference. "He's the only man I ever saw," says Steve Owen, the Giants' coach, with deep reverence, "who ran his own interference."

In the winter of 1933–34 Nagurski took up wrestling and in '37 tried, with astounding success, to combine two careers in a single season. It kept him bounding around the country, as he phrased it, "like a guy with the sheriff on his tail."

Recalling the busiest stretch of this hectic span, he shakes his head and emits a heartfelt "whew." And small wonder, for look at this schedule:

Sunday, Sept. 19—Played with Bears at Green Bay.
Tuesday, Sept. 21—Played with Bears at Duluth.
Wednesday, Sept. 22—Wrestled in Portland, Ore.
Thursday, Sept. 23—Wrestled in Vancouver, B. C.
Friday, Sept. 24—Wrestled in Seattle, Wash.
Monday, Sept. 27—Wrestled in Phoenix, Ariz.
Wednesday, Sept. 29—Wrestled in Los Angeles.
Thursday, Sept. 30—Wrestled in Oakland, Calif.
Friday, Oct. 1—Wrestled in Salt Lake City, Utah.
Monday, Oct. 4—Played with Bears at Pittsburgh.
Wednesday, Oct. 6—Played with Bears at Erie, Pa.
Friday, Oct. 8—Wrestled in Philadelphia.
Sunday, Oct. 10—Played with Bears at Cleveland.

The remarkable feature of this extraordinary schedule was the football game in Pittsburgh. Nagurski joined the team that morning. He knew nothing of new signals and formations that had been added since he took off on his mat junket. Sam Francis was to do most of the fullbacking. But Sam was hurt before the game was more than a few minutes old. That meant the Bronk had to go to work.

And how he worked! For almost the full sixty minutes he played. He was the individual star of the game. He carried the ball practically the length of the field in an unbroken series of short stabs into the line to set up the short forward pass that won the game. He averaged five yards every time he threw his bulk into the Pittsburgh line.

"That wasn't anything," he belittles. "Pittsburgh simply had no defense for that offense. They had planned to stop our new attack and forgot about the old one. So on that march we just overpowered 'em."

Yeah, sure. Nagurski did, that is.

That was to be the end of the football trail for Nagurski. And it would have been if a war hadn't come along. Bronk, through an accumulation of minor football ailments, had been classified 4-F. Younger Bears were leaving for service,

and in '43 the old master heeded the pleas of the Bears and decided to try a comeback.

Thus did September 26, 1943, become notable in football history. For at exactly 2:51 P.M. that day Nagurski trotted out on a football field for the first time in six years—six years devoted almost exclusively to farming, with an occasional wrestling match thrown in for good measure.

He went in to replace his pal George Musso. They waved in passing, and the Bronk took over at left tackle. Years and inactivity seemed to preclude any notion of his ever playing fullback again.

Bang! The Packers promptly hurled their most potent weapon at the old fellow. That weapon was young Ted Fritsch, successor to Hinkle as Green Bay's power boy. Fritsch got up slowly—to his knees first.

"I knew it was you, Bronk," he said. "Jeez, you didn't even budge!"

Fritsch had known Nagurski only by reputation. Now he knew him by personal contact, and the reputation was enhanced.

"I don't think I'll ever forget this game," the Bronk said that night. "Some of us old-timers are getting a little slow now, and we feel those explosions a little deeper, then a little deeper. But we'll hold our own. Ask the Moose there."

Musso regarded his old friend wonderingly. "How does he do it?" he demanded of no one in particular. "That Nagurski! He can hardly walk, and there he was knocking those kids down like tenpins. . . ."

On November 28 that year the Bronk returned to his old position at fullback suddenly and quite unexpectedly. The Bears were embroiled with the Cardinals in a game they had to win to remain in the championship running. The play was well along in the third quarter, the Cards were stubbornly refusing to yield, and the Bears were desperately in need of a touchdown. It was their ball on the Cardinal thirty-eight yard line.

Nagurski was pacing up and down the side line. Suddenly he whirled and stepped up to Coach Hunk Anderson, who was kneeling on the side line intent on the play.

"Here," he said, "I guess it's time for old Bronk to go to work."

And without another word and without instruction he marched out onto the field and took his place at fullback. Three plays later the ball was on the eleven yard line. Four more plays and it was over for a touchdown!

Slowly, painfully, then, but to the accompaniment of such cheers as few athletes are accorded, Nagurski stumbled off the field. At thirty-five he had proved he still was the unstoppable Bronk of old, that the weight of years and an enemy line combined couldn't stop him.

"He isn't thirty-five," one of the Cardinals vowed. "That guy's lying. He hits as hard and is just as tough as the Nagurski of ten years ago."

"The Bronk made the all-pro team in one afternoon out there today," said Danny Fortmann, the Phi Beta Kappa guard. He didn't, of course, but he did make it six times during his nine seasons.

Having ridden the Bronk into victory over the Cardinals, the Bears went on to crush the Redskins, 41 to 21, in the title play-off. And appropriately one of the touchdowns in the championship game was scored by Bronko Nagurski.

In nine seasons Nagurski carried the ball for a total of 4,301 yards (or almost three miles). He scored 242 points. And for variation he threw 80 passes and completed 38.

There was only one possible defense for Nagurski. Steve Owen devised it. "Shoot him," said the Giants' coach, "before he leaves the dressing room!"

The Rock of Ages.

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THE TOE IN ACTION

Jack Manders kicks a field goal from placement with Carl Brumbaugh holding the ball.

OFF TO A GROUND-GAINING RECORD

Beattie Feathers rides the tail of the Bronk to stardom with Bears.

CHAPTER 13

THIRTEEN IN A ROW

THERE are thousands of football fans who maintain that the Bears of 1934 were the greatest team in the history of the game, college or professional. Certainly off its record it is worthy of consideration as such. It swept through a complete regular season's schedule undefeated and untied, rolling over thirteen consecutive opponents, a feat unmatched in professional annals. It ran the Bears' record to thirty-three games without a defeat, counting exhibition and practice games.

Yet tragedy and disillusionment lay in wait for that marvelous machine, for it passed into history without formal recognition as champion. That run of thirteen proved a jinx too great to hurdle, and the Bears were defeated in the East-West divisional play-off. They are remembered now as "just another team." But what a team!

The one club most frequently rated above it is the Bears of 1941, a whirlwind unit that was just reaching its peak when it was torn asunder by the war. But the Bears of '41 lost one game even though they went on to a championship. By a quirk of fate the second professional eleven to complete its schedule without defeat was the '42 remnant of the mighty monarchs of the year before. Yet that club, too, was deprived of its chance to be called champion, losing in the play-off even as another Bear team had done eight years before.

The football world little suspected when the Bears could get no better than a scoreless tie with the College All-Stars one summery night in '34, that here was a superteam in the making. It took the addition of one man from the All-Star squad to accomplish the transformation, which first became

manifest when the Bears trounced the Packers, 24 to 10, in the traditional league opener at Green Bay.

Joe Kopcha, hopelessly addicted to puns, collared reporters on the train as the team sped happily back to Chicago from that initial triumph.

"I'll bet," he chuckled, "that's the first time you ever saw Feathers on a Bear!"

Joe referred, of course, to Beattie Feathers, a sleek, darkly handsome halfback from the University of Tennessee. And awful as the pun was, it told a true story, for with Feathers the Bears fairly flew. He was tremendously fast, as elusive as a puff of smoke, a fine punter, and as hard to tackle as his name would imply.

Halas, realizing instantly that in Feathers he had an exceptional runner, tailored the Bear offense to Beattie's measure. He wasn't a sufficiently quick starter and didn't run with enough straightaway drive to fit into the T formation and its quick-opening plays. But once under full head of steam and turned loose in an open field, Feathers was more than likely to go galloping merrily into touchdown terrain. The trick was to break him into the clear.

Halas found the solution to that problem without so much as a single worry, and he's the "worryingest" man in football. The Bears continued to operate the T much of the time, but they also adopted a single-wing offense that sent Feathers dashing off tackle and around the ends with Nagurski clearing a path for him.

It was as natural a combination as ham and eggs, Scotch and soda, or Burns and Allen. Feathers would take the ball under his arm and go whizzing away in Nagurski's wake, flaming down the field like the tail of a comet.

They were an oddly matched pair—Nagurski the huge, silent giant from the far North; Feathers a smaller, equally silent chap from the deep South. Yet they were a team from the moment they entered the clubhouse, and one would not leave for the practice field until the other was dressed and

ready. Then they'd walk down the ramp together. And even as they went places together throughout the week, so did they on Sundays! Just how far they went forms a half page in the record book.

In that '34 season Feathers, riding behind the Bronk, galloped for a total of 1,004 yards, a mark that still stands despite the fact that he missed all of two league games and most of another because of an injury that cut short his career. He carried the ball 117 times from scrimmage for an average gain of 8.5 yards, which means he came close to registering a first down every time he ran. He never gained less than 41 yards in a game, and his longest dash was one of 82 yards for a touchdown.

After that opening triumph over Green Bay the Bears kept Feathers flying in the face of all opposition. Pittsburgh, Brooklyn, Cincinnati, the Cardinals, and Green Bay once again fell before them. Next they trounced Cincinnati once more by 41 to 7 at Wrigley Field in a game that was unique in two respects: Jack Manders missed a try for extra point for the first time in two years, and "Bull" Doehring threw a forward pass that caused one press-box unbeliever to leap up shouting, "What in hell was that? Did my eyes deceive me?"

He was assured his eyesight was normal but also that there was nothing at all normal about the play that led him to question his vision.

The ball was in scrimmage on the Cincinnati thirty yard line at a time when the Bears were so far ahead the game was assuming the proportions of a rout. Doehring took the ball and raced off to his right, dropping back as tacklers closed in on him, scampering along and clutching the ball like a kid fleeing a melon patch. Just as two sets of arms reached for him "Bull" whirled and with a reverse corkscrew twist of his left arm threw the ball from behind his back!

As straight as though pulled by a magnet it flew into the arms of Johnsos, who stood in the end zone. As the fans shrieked, Luke dropped the ball!

"I lost track of it," explained Johnsos, who is nearsighted, "when he whirled and dropped his arm. I didn't see it again until it was almost at my finger tips."

That play had its counterpart in an exhibition game in California when Doehring flipped a pass behind his back fifty-five yards through the air to Karr for a touchdown.

"That was one," Grange insists, "you had to see to believe."

If any doubting Thomas cares for visual proof of Doehring's ability to throw a football farther from behind his back than most men can in the traditional manner, he is referred to a movie short the Bears filmed in Hollywood. It's right there in celluloid.

From the Cincinnati massacre the Bears rushed on to beat the Packers for a third time, trounce the Giants 27 to 7, and rout Boston 21 to 0. Then they moved into the Polo Grounds, New York, for what was to be one of the most thrilling games in years, a game that left 55,000 fans limp and emotionally spent. Halas maintains it was the roughest, most vicious game he ever saw. Steve Owen disagrees, favoring the 1927 Bears-Giants clash.

The Giants were much the same team the Bears had beaten for the title the previous fall—big, aggressive, rough, and frightened not at all by the fearsome reputation their old enemies had acquired. They scored on the first play of the second period after a sustained march of fifty-nine yards, Ken Strong plunging for the last three yards and kicking the point.

The score grew to 9 to 0 at the start of the second half on a freak play that almost made George Corbett, speedy halfback, a goat as well as a Bear. Strong's third-period kickoff landed in the end zone with reverse English and bounced back onto the field of play. Corbett, thinking it an automatic touchback, picked up the ball, retreated leisurely behind the goal line and touched it to the ground. The officials, instead of taking the ball out to the twenty yard line and putting it in play as George expected, ruled it a safety, giving the Giants two precious points.

The start of the fourth quarter found the New Yorkers still nursing that 9-to-0 margin, but Bear hopes brightened as Manders broke away for a long gain. They sank abruptly, however, as a whistle blew on the play, and the Bears were set back to their one yard line for clipping. The Bear punter stepped back deep in the end zone to kick out of danger, but before the ball could be snapped another whistle blew.

"Hold it!" cried the umpire. "Hold it. Penalty of half the distance to the goal line!"

"Why?" asked Brumbaugh, the quarterback.

"Because," said the official with a dour look toward the Bear bench, "Halas just called me a so-and-so."

So the penalty of a half yard was exacted, and the Bears kicked out of trouble. Not long afterward another kick, a poor one by Kink Richards, gave them the break for which they'd been waiting.

Feathers returned the weak punt thirteen yards to the Giants' forty-six. Ronzani bolted through to the thirty-two, and Nagurski planted the ball only twelve yards from the goal line. Brumbaugh called time out.

"No, no," screamed "Zuck" Carlson, the all-league guard, "don't call time out. We'll be penalized."

"Nuts," said Brummy. "Look at the scoreboard. And you're worried about five yards."

In the time-out huddle Brumbaugh talked earnestly. "We got three hundred and some plays," he said testily, "and nothing to take care of Flaherty." Ray Flaherty, later coach of the Redskins and now coaching in the All-America Conference, was at end for the Giants and slicing in to play havoc with the Bear offense.

Brumbaugh turned to Miller, the center, "Ookie, you pass the ball directly to Feathers with no lead. Nagurski, you go block Flaherty. You guards, tackles, and ends—block! And you, Feathers, you big Indian, if you ever ran in your life, run now."

Feathers nodded. "I sure will," he said.

He did, too. For a touchdown. Manders kicked the extra

point, but with only three minutes remaining the Bear hopes for victory were as dark as the day had become.

Manders kicked off over the goal line, and the ball was put in play on the twenty. Harry Newman broke away for a good gain between Link Lyman and Bill Hewitt, Brumbaugh bringing him down. On the next play Max Krause tried the same hole only to find it wasn't open. There was a pile-up, and when it was untangled the ball was nestling in Lyman's huge arms on the Giant thirty-three yard line. Here was a chance. A slim one but still a chance. It might . . .

Manders and Nagurski hammered at the Giant line for eight yards in three plays. It was fourth down, two yards to go for a first down. The ball was on the twenty-five yard line. The timekeeper's watch showed one minute and fifty seconds left to play.

"That was the toughest decision I've ever had to make in all my years as a quarterback," Brumbaugh confesses. "Look at the alternatives. If I called for a place kick I must set the ball down at least eight yards back of the line of scrimmage, which would mean Manders would have to kick thirty-three yards—a bad risk even for Jack. If I called for a running play and didn't make the yardage for first down, we'd lose both the ball and the ball game for sure."

Brumbaugh called his signals, and Nagurski went crashing off the Bear left tackle behind Lyman. The quarterback's gamble had won. He had played his ace—Nagurski—and the Bronk had turned the trick with a first down.

"If Bronk had cut to the outside on the play, I believe he could have gone all the way to a touchdown," Brumbaugh insists. "But he might have been pinned down near the side line. He knew I wanted to keep the ball smack in front of the goal posts so Jack could kick, so he barreled straight ahead."

Nagurski plowed the middle again, and Manders followed suit. The ball was on the fifteen yard line, and the clock showed less than a minute to go. Now Brumbaugh called on Manders' trustworthy toe to kick a field goal from twenty-

three yards out. As he knelt to take the pass from center, Brumbaugh risked a glance upward at Manders.

"Put that ball down," Jack growled. "She'll go through."

Manders was a man of his word. The ball sailed true, over the crossbar and between the uprights for three points. The Bears had won, 10 to 9.

The clubhouse was more correctly a madhouse. Everyone was shouting and hammering on someone else's back. Halas was the most deliriously happy of all, and soon his shouting could be heard above the tumult.

"Rules are off tonight, fellows," he bellowed. "By golly, this is something to celebrate. There'll be a party tonight at the Hollywood—on me!"

The Hollywood restaurant, one of the popular Broadway night spots of the time, was a noisy place that night. The Bears took over, and big Link Lyman stole the show. With a bit of urging he mounted the stage, took the microphone, and sang with the orchestra, his rich baritone creating such a sensation he was called back time after time for encores until, weary and his voice growing husky, he playfully tackled the mike as evidence he had had enough.

About the time the hilarity was at its peak, Halas dropped in to see what was transpiring. As the hours passed, some of his ebullience had seeped away; the taste of victory was still sweet but no longer heady and intoxicating.

"How much of a bill have the boys run up?" he asked the manager.

"About eight hundred dollars," came the reply.

"Cut off their drinks!" Halas bellowed. "These men are athletes!"

Back in Chicago the following Sunday the Bears beat their old city rivals, the Cardinals, by 17 to 6, but it was a costly triumph. Feathers was bounced out of bounds by three tacklers in the early moments of the game and led away with a bone separation in the right shoulder that kept him out of the next two games and the championship play-off.

Brilliant as they had been all season, the Bears hadn't been able to shake off the Lions. This was the old Portsmouth team that had been purchased by G. A. "Dick" Richards and moved to Detroit under the new name. Detroit had won ten games and lost only one, so the Bears were faced with the necessity of beating the Lions either on Thanksgiving Day or the following Sunday to reach the play-off game.

Beating the Lions wasn't going to be easy, with both Feathers and Kopcha out of action. The big all-league guard had sustained a broken bone in his hand. It was an injury that, if it failed to knit properly, might endanger his medical career, for Joe was specializing in surgery and obstetrics. But, broken hand or no broken hand, he wanted to play football to help the Bears to an undefeated season.

No one would have realized just how badly Kopcha wanted to play were it not for an incident on the train en route to Detroit. Players wandering between cars were attracted by a commotion in the galley of the diner.

There, in the center of a circle of worried and frightened waiters and cooks, stood Kopcha, a huge meat cleaver in his good hand, waving it menacingly toward the huge cast that immobilized his other wrist and hand.

"If I can just cut this thing down a bit," he explained, "maybe the trainers can wrap a soft bandage around it, and I can play."

Dr. Joe didn't play in that game, but he did play a part in winning it. The team was tense in its dressing room that Thanksgiving morning, so tense that Halas, after delivering his pregame speech, felt disturbed. He turned to Kopcha, always a great favorite with the boys.

"Have you anything to say, Joe?" he asked.

Kopcha got to his feet, cleared his throat, and looked about him, deadly serious. "Fellows," he began, "this is a moment we have long anticipated . . ."

He got no farther. Or if he did his words were drowned in the torrent of laughter. Bears laughed till their sides ached,

until they had to wipe tears from their eyes. The tension was broken, and the team took the field ready to play the game of its life. Fortunately so, too, for the Bears had to play the game of their lives to win, 19 to 16.

The Lions led at the half, 16 to 7, the greatest deficit the Bears had been called upon to overcome. Brilliant play by Ace Gutowsky and Glen Presnell had kept them with their backs to the wall, but they began to revive in the third period when Manders kicked two field goals to trim Detroit's lead to 16 to 13.

Detroit was on the march in the final period and had just chalked up a first down on the Bear forty-one yard line when the break came. Gutowsky fired a pass to "Dutch" Clark, but Joe Zeller stepped in its path and set off downfield. Joe ran with all the grace, rhythm, and elusiveness of a runaway bus. Straight toward the corner of the field he chugged, and had he remained on that track, he could have scored, as Johnsos partially blocked Gutowsky inside the ten yard line. But Joe at that point recalled some fancy halfback footwork he had seen and admired. He cut back and Gutowsky tackled him on the four yard line. The run had covered fifty-five yards.

Given this respite, the Lions rose up to hold Nagurski to three yards in two headlong cracks at the line. They set themselves to repel another charge, but it never came. Instead the Bronk faked a plunge, straightened up, and tossed a short pass over the middle to Hewitt, who stood all alone and waiting in the end zone. The old fooler had worked like a charm once again, and "Father" Lumpkin, Detroit's battle-scarred backfield veteran, slammed his headgear down in futile rage.

Three days later the Bears beat the Lions again in Chicago, this time by 10 to 7 in the mud. It was their thirteenth consecutive league triumph and their thirty-third game without a defeat.

Ahead of them remained the championship play-off game—and disaster.

CHAPTER 14

THE GIANTS PULL A SNEAKER

LAURIE WALQUIST, the assistant coach, stepped out of the hotel for a brisk prebreakfast stroll down Broadway. A biting wind sent his hat spinning down the almost deserted street and stabbed through his overcoat with icy needles.

"My gosh," breathed Walquist, and he ducked into the shelter of a store doorway to glance at a thermometer. It registered a frigid nine degrees above zero.

"My gosh," Laurie said again, and retreated to the hotel to inform Halas. The headman already knew, for he had attended early mass. He couldn't know, however, that these arctic blasts were to freeze his Bears out of a championship within a few hours.

At about the very moment Walquist was looking at the thermometer, stout Steve Owen, coach of the Giants, was entering the Polo Grounds. Bundled heavily against the cold, he walked slowly up and down the gridiron examining the playing surface with a careful and practiced eye. Then he hastened to the ball park office and got busy on the telephone.

He didn't dial Halas' number, but he must have reached him by telepathy if not by telephone, for in the course of the subway ride from the hotel to the Polo Grounds the Bear coach said a significant thing.

"You know," he told a newspaperman, "after all our careful preparations we overlooked one thing—tennis shoes."

The remark seemed a trifle silly at the moment, but they were as true words as Halas, a truthful man, ever uttered.

Both teams were handicapped by injuries to keymen. Feathers and Kopcha were lost to the Bears, for although both were in uniform, it would have been foolhardy to use them. Harry Newman, who had cracked two vertebrae a

couple of weeks before, was on the Giant bench, his back in a cast, but he insisted he could play.

The field when the opening whistle blew was frozen but with a fine covering of water in places where the sun could penetrate. This water froze to a glare of ice as play progressed and the afternoon grew colder. On such footing neither team could stage much of a sustained offense, and the ball carriers were taking a painful physical beating every time they crashed down on turf that was as unyielding as concrete and as slippery as a roller rink.

Nagurski in particular was having a bad time of it. Ken Strong and Kink Richards at defensive halfback weren't trying to tackle the Bronk. They were rolling into him with low, hard blocks and knocking his feet out from under him. Bronk, upended, would fly into the air and come crashing down with earth-shaking thuds. Still, the big fellow came close to making a rout of the first half.

New York scored first, Strong kicking a field goal from placement from the thirty-eight yard line, a magnificent boot under the circumstances. The Bears moved ahead early in the second period on a thirty-six-yard march the first incident of which was a pass from Molesworth that bounced off Flaherty's hands into those of Ronzani, who was chased out of bounds less than a yard from the Giants' goal line. That yard presented no problem to Nagurski, and after he had bridged it, Manders added the point.

Again the Bears went on the prowl from their own forty-six yard line to the New York nine. When they were stopped there, Manders kicked a field goal to make the score 10 to 3. Strong fumbled Manders' ensuing kickoff, and Karr plopped on the ball for the Bears only six yards from the goal line. Here the Bears' luck began to run out, for Nagurski ran for a touchdown only to have the play recalled and the Bears penalized five yards for backfield in motion. Manders then missed a field goal attempt from twenty-four yards, a distance he usually could cover blindfolded.

Just before the end of the half Nagurski got loose again

and charged to the goal line, but once more a whistle sounded, and the Bears were penalized for holding. The culprit was Lyman, who still insists it was the only offensive holding penalty ever assessed against him.

Because of this rule infraction Manders was called upon to kick for the third time. This effort, from thirty-eight yards, had plenty of carry but slid just outside the left upright. It sent the teams to the warmth of the clubhouse with the Bears enjoying a 10-to-3 half-time advantage.

During the intermission one lone Giant came jogging down the steps from the clubhouse and ran up and down the field. Few, if any, of the congealed fans noticed him at all. They were busy reaching for antifreeze in their hip flasks or huddled under the stands gulping steaming hot coffee. It is doubtful if more than a half-dozen persons in the Polo Grounds recognized the lone runner as Bill Owen, the coach's brother, and saw that he was wearing basketball shoes.

When Steve Owen had reached for the telephone earlier in the day, he began dialing sporting-goods stores. None was open on Sunday. Steve fumed. He knew the Giants would have more secure footing on that frozen field if they were to wear rubber-soled shoes instead of the cleated variety. But he didn't have any rubber-soled shoes, and apparently he wasn't going to be able to find any.

Steve phoned friends he knew in the sporting-goods business. No luck. Either they weren't at home, or couldn't get into the store on Sunday. So Steve took his problem to the clubhouse.

Gus Mauch and Charley Porter, trainers for the Giants, also helped tend the physical needs of Manhattan College athletes. "Yes," they told Owen, "there are basketball shoes in the gymnasium all right. But we haven't got a key. We can't get in."

Owen isn't one to give up easily. He thought and he thought, and inspiration came! He thought of Abe Cohen, one of the most ardent of Giant fans. Abe Cohen was a tailor, and he made the Manhattan College uniforms. Maybe he

could find a way to get into the gym. Abe was summoned, and the situation explained.

"If there are any basketball shoes at Manhattan, I'll get 'em," he promised, and set off.

Shortly before time for the opening kickoff Steve Owen was summoned to the telephone. The voice on the other end was Abe Cohen's.

"There are shoes out here," he reported, then added plaintively, "but they're in individual lockers, and we can't get in."

"Break the locks!" Owen roared. "Bring back those shoes. I'll take the responsibility."

The second quarter was well under way when Cohen came panting back to the Polo Grounds. With him he brought the loot—nine pairs of basketball shoes, destined to be the most famous and highly publicized bits of footwear since Mercury's winged sandals.

There wasn't time to use them in the first half. "Anyway," says stout Steve, "we couldn't have used 'em. The field was still too wet."

Brother Bill was gleeful, however, when he returned to the dressing room from his half-time romp in the sneakers. "They're pretty good," he reported. And so it came about that nine pairs of basketball shoes adorned nine pairs of feet as the Giants came out for the second half. Only center Mel Hein and guard Potsy Jones wore regulation football shoes and cleats.

Strong, who had been helped off the field near the end of the second quarter, lined up to make the kickoff. The first effort squirted off the side of his foot out of bounds, and Owen ordered a substitute, wearing heavy football shoes, in to kick. Strong waved him away. "That was my fault," he shouted to his coach.

His next kick, despite the soft toe of the rubber-soled shoe, was delivered with such violence that the ball landed in the Bear end zone, and the nail was torn from Strong's big toe!

Not immediately did the shoes begin to work their magic, for Strong fumbled a poor pass from Hein, and Hewitt

recovered for the Bears on the Giant ten yard line. Three plays lost five yards, so Manders kicked a field goal to raise the Bear margin to 13 to 3. And that's the way things stood when the final period began.

The inability of the Bears to gain an inch preceding Manders' kick should have been the tip-off as to what was in store in the fourth quarter. As the field became more and more icy, the Bears began to skid with greater zip. They could get no traction, no drive. The backs couldn't cut sharply into the designated holes, and even if they could have done so, the holes weren't there, for the linemen couldn't hold their balance to open them. The Giants, surely shod, simply shoved the Bears around.

Twenty-seven points the Giants scored that fantastic fourth quarter! Twenty-seven points in one quarter against a team that had held them to nineteen points in eleven previous periods that season!

Even so, the pattern of the game might have been changed, save for one play, the play that set the Giant juggernaut in motion. It came early in the final quarter after Strong had brought back Molesworth's punt nine yards to the Bear twenty-eight yard line.

Ed Danowski, doing most of the passing in place of the injured Newman, tossed a pass downfield toward the right-hand corner. It was intended for Ike Frankian, the end, but it overshot its mark. Brumbaugh of the Bears leaped for the ball on the three yard line, a step from the side line. He could easily have batted it out of bounds, but it was a third-down pass, and he didn't want to give the Giants another chance to throw. An interception would give the Bears possession and cut short the threat.

But Brumbaugh and the Bears never got possession of that ball. Brummy, in his leap, snagged the pass with his left hand and brought it down, intending to cradle it against the right and maybe run back a few yards. Brumbaugh still was clutching the ball insecurely in one hand when Frankian, skidding

along at full speed, hooked his arm around it, snatched it away, and slid over the goal line. Startled and not realizing what had happened, Brummy began to look around frantically for the ball. Neither he nor the spectators knew where it was or what had happened until the jubilant Frankian held that elusive pigskin high above his head in touchdown territory.

Moments later Strong bolted through the line outside the Bear right tackle and behind perfect interference sprinted forty-two yards to a touchdown. That did it. The Bears were through, for they couldn't escape from the slipperiest portion of the field where each kickoff left them They might as well have been on ice skates They were helpless while their sure-footed foes shoved over two more touchdowns, one being carried over by Strong, the other by Danowski. The final score was 30 to 13.

The last five minutes of the game presented a weird spectacle. Hysterically happy fans, scarcely able to comprehend the slaughter that was taking place before their unbelieving eyes, stormed out of the stands, over the side lines, and onto the field, the better to see what was happening, to pat their champions on the back. The Giants had the ball about the six yard line in the corner, and the pressure of fans became so great it engulfed the Giant bench, sweeping Steve Owen along in its irresistible surge. The coach never got back to the bench or his team until the game was over and he had climbed the stairs to the clubhouse.

Among the first to give him boisterous greeting was Johnny Del Isola, center from Fordham. The last Steve had seen of Johnny he was sitting on the bench in a pristine uniform, for he hadn't been in the game. Now he looked as if he had been in a bad accident. His uniform was dirty, his face and hands were scratched, blood trickled from his mouth.

"Good Lord," said Steve, figuring he must have been in a fight with stampeding spectators. "What happened to you?"

"Oh," said Del Isola, "I couldn't see you anywhere, and I figured Hein needed a rest. So I played the last five minutes!"

The Bears were disconsolate, heartbroken. Many of them wept unashamedly as they struggled out of their uniforms. It remained for Link Lyman to put into words the feeling no one else could express.

"I'm old and worn out," Lyman said wearily. "This was probably my last game. The winner's end, the loser's end—what do they mean to me? The dough will be gone in a couple of months anyhow. But how I'd like to swagger around and tell my grandchildren and all the folks out in Nebraska, 'Boys, I played on an undefeated team—the greatest team that ever played football!' "

So ended a dream. But the Bears were to be accorded a measure of revenge. On January 27, 1935, they met the Giants again in an exhibition game in Los Angeles, scoring in the first three minutes and beating the New Yorkers soundly, 21 to 0.

Yet even here things didn't work out as the Bears would have wished. In the fourth period Grange was put into the line-up as the Bears got possession of the ball on their twenty yard line. The old Galloping Ghost, with a dash of fire reminiscent of the Grange of a decade before, ran for forty-one yards before Richards hauled him down from behind.

What a valedictory it would have been had Grange, in his farewell game, made a touchdown run of eighty yards against the world champions.

"That occurred to me while I was running," Grange laughs today. "I made up my mind if I scored on that play I'd lay the ball down in the end zone and walk right off the field. That would be all for the old redhead.

"For that matter I realized before I reached mid-field that old Red was through. My feet kept getting heavier and heavier. I could hardly put one in front of the other. I knew I'd never reach the end zone, but that I had reached the end."

CHAPTER 15

THE CHIN AND THE TOE

ON January 14, 1947, the late editions of the Chicago afternoon papers headlined the news that William E. Hewitt had died of injuries sustained when his auto crashed into a culvert on the Bethlehem Pike near Sellersville, Pennsylvania. Tears welled to many a manly eye as it read the news.

"I'll never forget the day he reported to the Bears," said Red Grange with a reverence based not on the fact that Hewitt was gone, but on what he had accomplished while proving himself the greatest end who ever played football.

"He had one pair of corduroy pants that at sometime must have been white but were a sort of tattletale gray. He had one pair of saddle shoes and one blue Michigan sweater with a big yellow M. That was his costume. Always. Maybe he had other and fancier clothes, but we never saw them. He'd wear the same getup everywhere, even into swanky dining rooms if he could get away with it. Always the same pants and shoes and sweater, cut so low at the neck that the hair on his chest bristled like a fur collar. He was all football player, and what a football player!"

Some of the latter-day Bears who weren't with the team during his heyday discovered the truth of that last sentence after he had been traded to the Eagles in 1937. The game was played in Philadelphia, and three of the Bears, knowing Hewitt was the spark plug of the Eagles, decided to discourage him as quickly and completely as possible. From three different angles the plotters barged into him, and under the jarring impacts he went down, but not to stay. Bouncing lightly to his feet, Bill turned to the three Bears and laughed.

"That's a silly play," he chided, "three men on one end.

What's the matter with you guys? Haven't you got any confidence in yourselves?"

That remark was typical of bristle-thatched, granite-chinned, happy-go-lucky Bill Hewitt, known affectionately to his teammates as "Stinky" and to the fans as "The Offside Kid" because he had such a terrific charge and got off his mark so fast he always appeared to be off side even though he seldom was. He played five seasons with the Bears, starting in 1932 and winning all-league honors for four of those years.

Bill would have attracted the world's attention had he been playing incognito in an empty stadium in Timbuktu. He wasn't big—five feet eleven inches and 185 pounds—but he was made of granite, with a thick neck, a barrel chest, and tremendous arms. "Three parts gorilla and one part Englishman," someone once described him, and another writer said, "He came into the league with the biggest pair of arms and the greatest desire to play football of any player on record."

During his years with the Bears he never wore a headgear for the simple reason that one bothered him and, he felt, handicapped his play. In his final campaign with the Eagles the National League finally forced him to conform with their rule and wear a helmet, but even then he didn't like it, and it was strange indeed not to see his tousled head bristling defiance from the end of the scrimmage line.

Hewitt first played football in his senior year in high school at Bay City, Michigan, where he was born on October 8, 1909. He frankly admitted he wasn't much of a player at end either as a prep or later at Michigan, where he played for two seasons at end and fullback. His competition was cut short early in his junior year when he suffered a broken ankle, the only injury he ever incurred on the gridiron.

It was in '33, his second pro campaign, that the world became thoroughly Hewitt-conscious. That year he accomplished so many seemingly impossible feats that new superlatives were invented to describe his play.

"I never saw anything like it," Grange insists. "I don't believe he made a mistake all year."

Probably his most sensational game was against Green Bay that fall when he sparked the Bears to two touchdowns in the final two minutes to turn a 7-to-0 defeat into a 14-to-7 victory.

The story really began the day before the game when the Bears were running through their final practice session at the Logan Squares' baseball park on Chicago's northwest side. As two squads ran signals, Halas was supervising the reserves and failed to see Hewitt take the ball on an end-around for the varsity.

"In the huddle," Bill explained later, "I told Johnsos to run down the field, and I'd throw him a pass. So, instead of running, I passed. Luke caught the ball, and everybody laughed. The next play was the last one of the drill, and again it was the end-around. I looked up just in time to see Luke running for the showers, so I threw the ball at him. This time I overshot and the ball smacked up against the clubhouse."

Halas turned just at this instant and saw what had happened. On the eve of the Packer game he didn't relish such horseplay. "There won't be any clubhouse on the field at Green Bay tomorrow," he shouted with a dark look at Hewitt's wide grin.

On the morrow the Bears were in possession of the ball on the Green Bay thirty-five yard line. It was third down and twelve to go, two minutes remained in the game and the Packers led, 7 to 0. In the huddle Brumbaugh called, "Forty-five lateral to Hewitt on three," the numerals designating the play, and the count on which the ball was to be snapped from center. As they broke from the huddle, Brummy winked at Hewitt, who nudged Johnsos. There was immediate understanding among the three.

Hewitt took the ball from Brumbaugh's hands on an end-around, swung backward and toward the side line, and then

threw as hard as he could just as the Packers sent him crashing to the sod some ten yards back of the line of scrimmage. The gleeful Packers pounded one another on the back, and the Bears began to curse Hewitt under their breath for losing so much ground.

A startled whoop from the crowd was the first indication the players had that all was not as it should be. For there in the end zone, with the ball and a touchdown, stood Johnsos.

"No, Mr. Halas," Hewitt grinned, "there's no clubhouse out here, but there is a Johnsos!"

The score was now Green Bay, 7; Bears, 6; and off the Bear bench came a rawboned young giant with immense hands and a toe that was to become legendary. He was making his debut with the Bears, and his name was Jack Manders. As calmly as though he were strolling down Michigan Avenue, he kicked the tying point.

The Bears kicked off, and the Packers in desperation tried three passes that failed, then punted. The punt traveled only a few feet before it struck an obstacle. That obstacle was Hewitt's chest, and the ball rebounded from it and rolled toward the Green Bay goal.

"Bill Buckler and I were right on the ball as it bounced along," Bill said. "Nobody else was close, so I figured I'd let Buckler, a guard, pick it up and score the first touchdown of his life. But Buck just looked at the ball and waved his arms. Finally he cried:

" 'For God's sake, Bill, pick up the damned thing.' "

Hewitt did, Manders kicked the extra point, and the Bears had won, 14 to 7, to hand the Packers their first defeat on the home field since 1927.

Hewitt was forever thinking up new offensive didos. The Bears' famous jump pass followed by a lateral was a Hewitt concoction. In practice he'd grab one of those short basketball tosses from Nagurski, and through sheer exuberance, give it a flip over to Bill Karr, then they'd go galloping down

the field tossing the ball back and forth. The play was called the "Stinky Special."

Defensively Bill was even greater than he was on offense. Only one play fooled him consistently—the Green Bay reverse—and even a Hewitt is entitled to one weakness. The secret of his defensive genius lay in an uncanny knack of diagnosing plays, those tremendous arms with which he tossed opponents aside, and his jet-propulsion start.

Rival clubs always protested to the head linesman that Hewitt was off side, but he seldom was penalized. He timed his break so perfectly that only the linesman staring directly down the scrimmage line could determine whether or not he was beating the gun. To get this split-second timing he would count with the opposing team as its signals were called, and watch the center's hands for the telltale tightening of the fingers that presaged the snapback.

Typical of his defensive genius is a tackle he made on "Dutch" Clark one day. Clark, slowed by his own interference, was overtaken from the rear by Bill, who had been blocked out of the play momentarily. Hewitt caught up with him about the ten yard line but knew that if he made a diving tackle the momentum might knock "Dutch" across the goal line. Without hesitating he leaped, grabbed Clark by the shoulder pads, and with the vast strength of his powerful forearms, jerked him backward and down, still some eight yards short of a score.

Younger players worshiped him. A sports writer asked Joe Stydahar, in the midst of his brilliant freshman year, how he managed to do so well in his first campaign as a pro. "Oh," said Joe, "that's easy. Hewitt tells me what to do."

An iron man, he seldom played less than fifty minutes of a game, and frequently he was in action for the entire hour, yet the trainers seldom saw him. One Monday morning after a tough game with the Lions, Bill strolled into the Wrigley Field clubhouse to let Andy Lotshaw rub some of the soreness from his myriad bruises. His greeting was a surprised

shout from the four teammates who were there ahead of him:

"What in hell are *you* doing here?"

Bill always got a chuckle out of an incident that happened during a time-out period in a game with the Redskins when Cliff Battles, Redskin back, and Bill got to talking.

"Where's that old bus of yours?" Battles asked, referring to an open touring car Hewitt had driven west the year before.

"Home," said Bill. "Think I'll trade it in."

"How much you want for it?" Battles queried.

"A hundred bucks," said Bill.

"Give you seventy-five."

Hewitt snorted. "One hundred or nothing," he said, but got no further as the referee grabbed both men with a vigorous hand.

"Cut it out, you two!" he ordered. "Either quit this fighting or out you go!"

The deal for the car was never made.

Hewitt and Joe Kopcha, his roommate, side-kick, and stooge on the Bears, could turn out more atrocious puns than Ed Wynn. Bill was blessed with an infectious laugh and a keen sense of humor, and Kopcha thought he was the funniest man on earth, going into paroxysms of laughter over even the worst of Bill's cracks. The other Bears enjoyed his nonsense as much as Joe did, but were less demonstrative, which brings to mind the one time Bill was stopped completely.

The Bears were on an exhibition tour of the west, and Jim McMillen, who dearly loves a practical joke, "framed" a drawing room full of players not to laugh at anything Hewitt said. All agreed, even Kopcha, and right at that point in came Bill, bursting with a new story he had heard. He told it with gestures and a flourish, but no one even smiled. He looked startled, then told another. This time Kopcha could hold back no longer and guffawed, but the others smothered their grins although their sides were aching. Hewitt in des-

peration tried two more, two of his best, but still no response. Bill shrugged his massive shoulders. "It's a tragedy," he said, "when men lose their sense of humor." And he walked away followed by a cascade of laughter.

Stan Baumgartner, Philadelphia sports writer and former major league pitcher, was officiating in a game after Hewitt had been traded to the Eagles, and slapped him with a fifteen-yard penalty.

"What was I doing?" Bill inquired meekly.

"You know darn well what you were doing," Baumgartner replied.

"Hum-m-m," mused Hewitt, "just as lousy an official as you are a writer!"

One of Hewitt's greatest games came near the end of his career in Detroit in December of '38. The Eagles weren't flying high that year, and the Lions needed only to defeat them to tie with Green Bay for the Western Division championship. Detroit was a top-heavy favorite, and announcements were made concerning the sale of tickets for the playoff with the Packers the following week.

These announcements were premature in view of an article that appeared in the game program that afternoon. It referred to Hewitt as "double ugly." The Eagles made sure Bill saw that article, and the Lions soon were transformed into kittens by one wild man.

First Bill grabbed a pass from Dave Smukler and tossed one of his copyrighted laterals to Joe Carter, the other end, for a touchdown. In the second half he caught another Smukler pass in the end zone for a touchdown and in between made so many brilliant tackles that the Eagles won, 21 to 7, and a Detroit paper paid him this tribute: "Hewitt never was better as he carried the Eagles along on his play and sophomoric enthusiasm."

His zest for competition, his knack of being able to do his best when the going was toughest, were what made Hewitt great. There will never be another like him, for in

this age of specialization an end concentrates either on offense or defense. Hewitt was a master of both. Perhaps it was fitting that his end was as violent as his end play had been.

When Manders kicked those two extra points following Hewitt's heroics in the Green Bay game of 1933, he was launching a succession of accurate kicks that should endure as long as record books are printed. From the moment his toe sent the ball spinning over the crossbar in the first game of '33 until the third game of 1937 Jack Manders never missed a point after touchdown. Seventy-two consecutive times his aim was perfect, and when he finally did miss, it was only because he miscalculated the strength of a gale that was blowing across the field and carried the ball against the right-hand upright.

His kicking was so effortless and so precise that "Rocky" Wolfe, the Bears' praise agent for many years, dubbed him "Automatic Jack." The name stuck. Before he retired after eight seasons, his toe had left two other imprints in the archives—a record of ten field goals in one season (1934) and a total field goal output of forty. Until Don Hutson went on a touchdown binge in 1941, Manders' scoring achievement of seventy-nine points in '34 stood as a season's record for production. In compiling that mark Jack scored only three touchdowns, all other points flying off the end of his shoe. For good measure he kicked two field goals and one point after touchdown in the championship play-off that year.

When Halas sent Manders into that memorable Green Bay game, he did so with a slight feeling of uncertainty and uneasiness, for Jack had never been used much as a kicker during the years he wore the Nagurski mantle as fullback for Minnesota's Golden Gophers. But he knew the kid could kick and that he had ice water in his veins.

Manders always has given Brumbaugh a generous slice of the credit for his place-kicking achievements, for Brummy held the ball on the majority of his placements and wasn't

holding when he finally missed an extra point. They had one superstition, those two Bears. Before every kick Manders would carefully wipe off the toe of his shoe while the quarterback made a small tee of dirt or sod eight yards back of the line of scrimmage. Then Brummy would turn and spit on the toe of Jack's shoe. It was a vital part of the performance, they maintained, and a guarantee against the kick going astray.

Brumbaugh always knelt with his left knee six inches from the tee, and as he took the pass from center before placing it on the tee he would spin the ball in his hands so that the lacing pointed toward the goal posts or away from them. Were the lacings at the side their wind resistance might affect the flight of the ball.

After the '37 season Brumbaugh rejoined the Bears for an exhibition tour and was at quarterback in the fourth period of a game against the Redskins at Miami. The Bears were leading by thirteen points, and when they advanced into position for a field goal, Brumbaugh called time.

"Look, fellows," he pleaded, "hold 'em in that line. This'll be the last time I ever hold the ball for Jack, and I want to see it split those uprights again. Just for old time's sake."

It would be a fitting climax to report that this, of all their kicks, was good. But it wasn't. It was attempted from an angle, and the sun was striking Jack and Brummy squarely in the eyes as they lined up the kick. Brummy placed the ball more or less by dead reckoning, and Jack, still blinded by a preliminary peek into the sun, kicked in the general direction of the goal. The ball rammed directly into one of the uprights and rebounded onto the field.

"Place-kicking," Manders declares, "is a matter of timing, concentration, and practice. A kick must be delivered with the same painstaking care that would go into a massé in billiards or an important putt in golf. And as for golf, always remember that its fundamental rule applies to kicking, too —keep your eye on the ball!"

In delivering his kick, Manders stood roughly five feet back of the tee and would take a step and a half forward—a half step with the right foot, a full one with the left—then kick. His head always was kept down with his eye focused on the point of impact where it remained after the ball had been kicked. His follow-through was perfect, with no swing toward the left, a common fault with most kickers.

Points sailed off his shoe like chips from an ax. He was a scoring threat from any point within the forty yard line, a guarantee against a collapse of the running or passing attack. With Hewitt to spark rallies and Manders to climax them, the Bears had an unbeatable one-two punch. The chin and the toe.

CHAPTER 16

THE LEAN YEARS

THE express man staggered into the clubhouse in the Bears' training camp the fall of 1935 and deposited a bulky package at the feet of Rennie Wykowski, the equipment manager. He whipped a bill from his pocket and thrust it forward.

"Collect!" he said.

Wykowski blinked at the figure on the bill, counted the small change in his pocket regretfully, then set out in search of Secretary Frank Halas. Frank hadn't the slightest notion what the package might contain, but he supposed it was some equipment his brother had ordered and neglected to mention, so he peeled a few bills from a roll and handed them to Wykowski, who passed them on to the express man.

Practice at an end, George Halas took his shower, dressed, then spied the massive bundle on the floor.

"What," he demanded in surprise, "is this?"

Wykowski explained. George shook his head in bewilderment. "But I haven't ordered anything," he protested, and began to rip off the wrappings. Then he tore open the box itself and fell back as though some one had slapped him across the face with an overripe herring.

The package contained nothing but old worn-out shoes—all of them with rubber soles. Out tumbled tennis shoes, basketball shoes, sneakers of all descriptions, not one of them fit for a moment's wear.

To this day George does not know who sent him that bulky and costly reminder of the 1934 play-off, although he can't help thinking Steve Owen carries a deep, dark secret in his ample bosom. Those shoes were an omen of unpleasant days to come, too, for the Bears were destined to fall on evil

times in the seasons of 1935–36. The club that had lost only two of twenty-six league games through '33 and '34 won only six, lost four, and tied two in '35 to finish in a tie with the Cardinals for last place in the Western Division. The next year they were runners-up to Green Bay with nine victories and three defeats.

Feathers and Nagurski had formed the backbone of the Bears' offense in '34, but neither was of much use to the club in '35. The Bronk was hurt and out of action a large percentage of the time with a sciatic condition and a bony growth on his hip. Feathers underwent an operation on his injured shoulder in February but never regained the wizardry that was his during his one unstoppable campaign. Add to these items the fact that Lyman retired, leaving a gaping hole at tackle, and the reasons behind the Bear decline become obvious.

Art Buss, an earnest youngster from Michigan State, was brought in to replace Lyman, but he was inexperienced, and until he had been seasoned, did not function as a team with Hewitt. Other new men included "Reds" Pollock, speedy halfback from Penn Military; and linemen Frank Sullivan from Loyola of New Orleans, Milt Trost of Marquette, and Chuck Mucha of Washington. The shortage of manpower was pointed out most sharply by the return to active duty of Jim McMillen, who was beginning to amass a fortune as a Bear stockholder, farmer, and professional wrestler. As a football player Jim not only was "over the hill" but sliding merrily on the downhill slope. However, he did play some minutes of fine ball and had the time of his life.

For all their question marks and infirmities, the Bears managed to give the professionals their first victory over the College All-Stars, 5 to 0. Then they journeyed to Green Bay, where they made the acquaintance of Don Hutson, who was to be a pestiferous burr in their hide for the next ten years. Their introduction to him was sensational, to say the least, and it came immediately after Hank Bruder, receiving Man-

ders' kickoff, slipped and fell and could scramble back only to the Packer seventeen yard line.

Arnie Herber faded toward his own goal line, drew back his right arm like a catapult, and sent the ball arching downfield as only he could do. Feathers, in the safety position, either underestimated the power of Herber's arm or the speed in Hutson's heels, for he permitted the lithe Alabamian to sprint right by and get behind him—a cardinal sin in football. Reaching high with clutching fingers, Hutson caught the ball over his right shoulder without breaking stride on the Bear forty-five yard line and galloped on to a touchdown, while Feathers, realizing his mistake too late, gave futile chase.

Bob Monnett kicked the extra point from placement, and the day's scoring was over. The Packers won, 7 to 0, and the Bears had acquired a headache that was to last a decade.

It became particularly acute a few weeks later in Chicago. With five minutes of play remaining in the game the Bears led the Packers, 7 to 3, Masterson's forty-four-yard pass to Ronzani having overcome a seventeen-yard field goal by Adolph Schwammel. With four minutes to go, Sisk broke away on a beautiful fifty-five-yard run to put the Bears ahead, 14 to 3. When a short kickoff return was followed by an offside penalty and a fumble, Green Bay seemed definitely defeated. There was no hint of the fireworks that were to explode on the next play.

Herber ducked back and to his right, evading a tackler, then whipped a short pass to Hutson, who bolted through a group of five would-be Bear tacklers and outfooted two more in a race to the goal line that covered sixty-eight yards.

Still the Bear lead seemed safe. At least it did until Masterson fumbled on the first play from scrimmage, and Ernie Smith recovered for Green Bay on the twelve-yard line. A pass ruled complete for interference and a seven-yard plunge by George Sauer put the ball on the three-yard line. On third down, still three to go, Herber faked a drive into

the line but leaped up and aimed a short pass to Hutson, who was standing unperturbed in the corner of the end zone. It was the Packers' ball game, 17 to 14. That H-to-H combination had raised h—— with the Bears once again.

One other game of that unhappy season is worthy of mention. That was a 3-to-0 defeat by the Giants, which was unique only because Ken Strong had to kick three times to score the vital three points. His first attempt was from the twenty-two yard line and hit the left upright, rebounding onto the field. The Bears were off side, however, so the Giants held possession of the ball for three running plays, then Strong kicked again from the fourteen yard line. The kick was perfect, squarely between the uprights, but both sides were off side, and again the ball was called back. So Strong kicked a third one, and this time nothing went amiss.

An odd feature about the Bear team was this: despite its lowly standing it was the best offensive club in the league, first in rushing and second in passing for a total of 3,454 yards.

At the winter meeting in February 1936, the National Football League voted to adopt a system of drafting college seniors. The idea was to help equalize the league by preventing the strong and wealthy clubs from obtaining the cream of the college crop through outbidding the poorer teams. Under the plan the team with the worst record in the season just completed would have first pick and so on down the line with the champion drawing last.

The Bears surprised everyone when, instead of grabbing a name player on their first choice, they reached down into West Virginia and drew a tackle by the name of Joseph Stydahar. It was one of the best moves they ever made, for big Joe, with time out for a hitch in the Navy during which he saw service in both the Atlantic and Pacific, was a bulwark of the Bear line until he quit after the 1946 season to become line coach of the Los Angeles Rams.

Halas' final choice in that inaugural draft was as perfect

a ten-strike as his first, although he doesn't take credit for it. The Bear coach, like all the others, came to the meeting prepared to select a few men he was particularly anxious to obtain. Research into the talents of lesser known players was dictated by chance rather than design as it is today when all good players are scouted carefully by the professionals. As Halas rose to make his final selection, he let his eye roam over the names listed on the huge blackboard, groping for an inspiration. It came.

"Fortmann," he mused aloud. "Daniel Fortmann. Of Colgate. That's a nice name. I'll take him."

All Fortmann did to justify that choice was to make the official all-league team five times prior to its abandonment in 1943. Halas lists him now at a guard position on his all-time all-professional team.

In 1940 his play was so meticulously clean that he was assessed only five yards in penalties although selected by the United Press as "Lineman of the Year." The next season he drew a penalty of fifty yards on a single play—for interfering with Don Hutson as the Packer end attempted to catch a pass. The infraction gave the Packers a first down on the Bear seven yard line but it also so infuriated Danny that on the very next play he made amends by intercepting a pass and running it out of danger.

Even after drawing Fortmann in the draft, Halas had a time getting his name affixed to a contract. Danny had enrolled at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons but discovered that inasmuch as the semester system was in vogue there, he could not hope to play football professionally.

"I not only wanted to play pro football," says Fortmann, "but I had to if I was to pay for my education. I was told that the University of Chicago had the quarterly system, so I unlimbered my thumb and hitchhiked to Chicago."

There, in conference with Halas and Dr. B. C. H. Harvey, dean of the University of Chicago Medical School, he worked out a program that would permit him to play and continue

his studies. Today Fortmann, like Joe Kopcha ahead of him, is a practicing physician, thanks to football.

Fortmann loves to relate a story that illustrates how fate placed not one but both hands to the shaping of his football destiny. It was told him recently by a classmate who chanced to be sitting in Dean Harvey's reception room at the time it happened.

There was one vacancy to be filled in the incoming freshman class, and Dean Harvey was sorting some fifty applications. One by one he sadly eliminated names, then rose from his desk and hurried out into the reception room, where he confronted his secretary.

"I have boiled down this list of applicants to two men," he said. "Both are Phi Beta Kappas. One is a football player, the other a violin player. Which shall I take?"

Danny was only nineteen when he reported to the Bears, the youngest player to break into the league. He stood almost an even six feet and weighed a compact 210 pounds. Stydahar was a bit older and a lot bigger, at six feet four inches and 230 pounds. They played side by side in the East-West game at San Francisco on New Year's Day, 1936, in the All-Star game in Chicago that fall, and through many professional campaigns.

"It helps tremendously," says Fortmann, "to become accustomed to working next to another player over a period of years. You get to know exactly what to expect of each other, how fast and how hard the other charges. A sort of partnership springs up, and that, in turn, is reflected in improved teamwork and general effectiveness."

The Bears learned of Stydahar, of course, from Bill Karr, who also came from West Virginia. Too, Brumbaugh had coached the West Virginia backfield in 1935 and was so enthused over the big tackle that he returned to the Bears himself in '36 along with his protégé. As a junior big Joe had blocked kicks that led to touchdowns against West Virginia Wesleyan, Duquesne, Washington and Lee, and Tem-

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MR. QUARTERBACK HIMSELF—SID LUCKMAN

Joe Stydahar

Danny Fortmann

ple. As a sophomore he played the entire season without a substitution.

"He has the size and stamina of Lyman and the speed of Healy," Brumbaugh reported to Halas.

Other "freshmen" joining the Bears in the fall of '36 were Eddie Michaels, chunky little guard from Villanova; Vern Oech, a tackle from Minnesota, and Ray Nolting, high-stepping halfback from Cincinnati who now, as head coach, is putting his alma mater back on the collegiate football map.

Nolting, unclaimed in the draft, had received offers from the Dodgers and Giants as well as from the Bears, whose bid was the lowest of the three, so he sought out his high-school coach for advice.

"Well," the coach reasoned with the fiery youngster, "the Bears have the best organization, and they are close to home. You'll get more publicity around here if you are playing in Chicago, and through that maybe you could pick up enough extra money to match the other offers."

Ray was still unconvinced, so the coach produced the clincher: "Besides," he added, "it's better to play with Nagurski than against him!"

"I met the Bronk for the first time in training camp at Delafield and was properly impressed," Nolting recalls. "He was the most powerful man I had ever seen. I thought to myself, 'Boy, I'd sure hate to tackle him.'

"And who do you think I had to tackle on the very first play of our first camp scrimmage? Sure. That's right. Nagurski! And in the open field, too! My teeth still rattle when I think of it."

As a starter that season the Bears went to Dallas for an exhibition in the Cotton Bowl against an outfit called the Centennial All-Stars. They lost it, 7 to 6, as Bob Reynolds of Stanford, later a star with the Lions, blocked Manders' try for the extra point. The All-Star touchdown was set up by an end who was to plague the Bears many times in later years with the Giants—Jim Lee Howell. He intercepted a

pass by Ronzani and ran to the one yard line from where Abe Mickal of Louisiana State scored. The winning point was off the toe of "Tillie" Manton.

Nolting played only about ten minutes of the league opener against Green Bay but was a minor sensation with a touchdown pass to Hewitt, a couple of fine punts, and a sixteen-yard run the first time he carried the ball. The Bears won, 30 to 3.

After that debut one would expect Nolting to be completely free of stage fright, yet he froze up tighter than the Yukon in winter when Feathers was injured early in a game at Pittsburgh the next week and Ray found himself catapulted into a regular job. No sooner had he trotted onto the field than Brumbaugh said, "Kid, I've got a pippin for you that should go for a touchdown." Ray nodded, the teams lined up, and Brummy barked his signals.

The play was a fake with Brummy feinting toward one halfback but giving the ball to Nolting instead. Brumbaugh took the ball from center, executed his fake beautifully, then went to hand off the ball to Nolting—but there was no Nolting to take it. The ball teetered dangerously on the quarterback's finger tips as he was tackled, but he managed to regain control of it before he was smothered.

In the huddle Brumbaugh was boiling. "What happened, freshman?" he demanded.

"I forgot the signals," said Nolting.

Brummy snorted. "I'll teach you to forget signals!" he bellowed. And with that he called for Nolting to drive off tackle on a quick-opening play. Eight times in succession he handed the ball to Nolting on the same play. After the eighth attempt the ball was on the two yard line, and Ray was weary but exultant.

"Now," he thought, "I'm going to score a touchdown."

But Brumbaugh had other ideas. The ninth signal was Nagurski through the middle for a touchdown. As the Bronk

chugged across the goal line and the pile untangled, Brummy turned to Nolting.

"I guess that'll teach you not to forget your plays, you freshman so-and-so!" he said.

Only through a circus catch by Karr were the Bears able to nose out the Cardinals, 7 to 3. Then they defeated the Lions, 12 to 10, in a game notable for two things. First was the return to form of Manders, who shook a year's slump by kicking two field goals. The second was a bit of shenanigan by which Kopcha sought to trap his old pal Hewitt.

Kopcha, an interne in a Detroit hospital, had been traded to the Lions as a convenience to him. He found it strange to be playing against his old teammates but was provoked by Hewitt's ability to break up one of the Lions' pet plays, the Caddel reverse. On this maneuver Ernie Caddel habitually ran for long gains, but now he was being checked by Hewitt, who was cutting sharply behind the line, giving chase, and bringing him down.

Dr. Joe pondered a moment over the best means of trapping his buddy and decided the only effective method would be to pull out of the line unexpectedly and block Hewitt as he came along, intent on catching Caddel. It was a sound idea, but Kopcha forgot one minor detail. On that reverse George Christensen, the mammoth Lion tackle, also came out of the line to run interference for Caddel. Joe pulled out as planned but instead of blocking Hewitt he ran smack into big Chris, knocking him flat!

The Packers were next and they won handily, 21 to 10, while the Bears' coaches kept their eyes glued on a large, fattish man in a brown hat, yellow sweater, and dark overcoat who was giving imitations on the Packer bench. He was Richard "Red" Smith, the assistant coach at Green Bay, who now holds a similar job with the Giants and who serves as a coach for the Chicago Cubs in baseball season.

For a vivid description of Smith's impersonations we quote a story by Lloyd Lewis, eminent historian, dramatic critic,

author, and at that time sports editor of the Chicago *Daily News:*

> At the moment . . . he . . . was taking off Napoleon Bonaparte, anyone could tell that. Not Napoleon standing up, looking out on the sad and solemn sea from the cliffs of St. Helena, but the one of Napoleon sitting down, one hand on his bosom, a scowl upon his face, making up his mind to divorce Josephine. Mr. Red Smith wasn't able to get his hand in his vest, because he had a sweater on, but he laid it across his stomach and achieved what I thought was a pretty good imitation, everything considered.
>
> Out on the field, muddy Mr. Bruder, the Green Bay quarterback, was admiring Mr. Smith's mimicry, too, and with it in mind, ducked into a huddle and came out calling a play which was quite a surprise to the Bears. A special kind of a reverse play, it was, one that sucked in even so astute an end as Mr. William Hewitt of the Chicago team.
>
> As the scattered players picked themselves up and followed the ball down some nineteen yards, where the Packers' Mr. Miller had at last been downed, Mr. Red Smith shifted himself on the Green Bay bench and went into another impersonation. He took his right knee in both arms, rocked it tenderly, and looked wistful.
>
> "This one is harder," mumbled Halas as he leaned forward, squinting painfully.
>
> "It's Lillian Gish, ain't it?" said Tarzan Taylor. "He's doin' Lillian Gish and the dead baby from *Intolerance* or something."
>
> Quarterback Bruder turned his eyes from Smith and called signals which prompted his halfback, Herber, to throw a pass to his end, Hutson. The ball was now very close to the Bears' goal, and the substitutes were howling for their fellows to hold that line. But the board of strat-

egy, still as death, bent its eyes again on Red Smith to see what he would do next.

That artist leaned forward, almost rose from the bench, placed a hand on each knee, lifted up his chin and smiled. It was quite a large smile, and he held it for a long time, long enough for quarterback Bruder to admire it thoroughly before Green Bay went into the huddle again.

"I know," said one of Halas' scouts, whispering to Taylor, "I know, don't tell me."

"Tell you, hell," said Taylor. "That's Shirley Temple. . . ."

"And a reverse around right end," gritted Halas as he ran out onto the field roaring into the officials' ears a demand that they make the Packers quit their illegal coaching from the bench. The shocked officials went over and laid down the law to Head Coach Lambeau while Red Smith looked innocently and patiently into the distance.

Today Red Smith doesn't have to resort to such Thespian tricks. Coaching from the bench was legalized by the league in 1944.

Following that affair with the Packers one game of importance remained on the schedule for '36, and it was a memorable one, for it produced the first Cardinal victory over the Bears in seven years. The score was 14 to 7, but only because a ninety-six-yard run by Stydahar was called back.

The big young tackle stole the ball from a Cardinal back and galloped the length of the field with referee Bob Karch in hot pursuit shouting that the ball had been blown dead and that it was silly to run. Convinced at last, Stydahar began to walk slowly back toward whence he had come, the referee asking for the ball. Joe refused to give it to him. Then began a two-man tug of war that endured for ninety yards while 40,000 people chorused: "Play ball!"

Bears and Packers met in a postseason game at Gilmore

Stadium, Los Angeles, winding up in a 20-to-20 tie that some skeptical sports writers intimated was a build-up for a return match in the same arena. Actually it was a blood and thunder battle that Red Smith insists is the most bitterly fought game in his extensive football memory. Lou Gordon and Feathers were banished for fighting, Herber suffered a broken nose, and Sisk a fractured thumb. In the return game Nagurski was carried off with an artery in his leg severed by a cleat, but he came back into action after physicians had finished stitching him together. His gesture was in vain, for Green Bay won, 17 to 14, but it convinced the world there was nothing of the hippodrome about games between these Hatfields and McCoys of football.

CHAPTER 17

A TITLE—ALMOST

THE story of the Bears of 1937 begins, strangely enough, in the Polo Grounds, New York, in a game between the Giants and Boston Redskins for the eastern championship of the preceding fall. Tony Sarausky kicked off for the Giants to open that game and a moment later was on his way to the hospital, where he remained for days in a critical condition. The man who put him there was Frank "Pete" Bausch, a six-foot three-inch, 225-pound center from Kansas.

The Giants promptly developed a great, abiding, and understandable hate for Bausch. They called him a dirty football player, an appellation he detested as thoroughly as the Giants detested him. Like Stydahar, he considered football a rough game and played it accordingly, asking or giving no quarter and going all out with a fervor that frequently was considered by opponents as unnecessarily dangerous to life and limb.

When he came to the Bears the next fall in a trade for Ed Kawal, Bausch told his own version of the disputed Sarausky incident.

"I hit Sarausky fairly and cleanly, but I sure hit him hard. I did not use my fists. It was a shoulder block that caught Tony in the pit of the stomach. Sarausky told me the next day in the hospital it wasn't my fault. He said he was watching the kickoff and didn't see me at all."

In any event, the Giants were gunning for Bausch when they met the Bears early in the '37 campaign. Big Pete spent a rough and unpleasant afternoon, and when it was over, his face was scratched and puffed and swollen, and a trickle of blood ran down his chin from bruised lips. But not once did

Bausch lose his temper. He knew in advance the kind of treatment to which he was going to be subjected, and had vowed to take it without a squawk. He couldn't afford to get mad and start punching, as the Giants had hoped, for the game wound up in a 3-to-3 tie, and the Bears needed him desperately in the line-up at all times.

Once "Tuffy" Leemans banged through the middle of the line and collided head on with Pete. "How do you like it, Bausch?" he muttered as they scrambled to their feet.

"I like it fine," said Pete. "Come back again."

He even kept his head and his temper when one New Yorker spoke some fighting words into his ear during a pile-up.

"Call me that after the game," Bausch retorted, "and I'll be glad to punch you in the nose. Right now I'm too busy playing football."

Pete Bausch played a lot of good football for the Bears that fall. So did other new men—Sam Francis and Les McDonald of Nebraska; "Eggs" Manske, secured from the Eagles in exchange for "Reds" Pollock; Ray "Buzz" Buivid, forward passer de luxe from Marquette; Del Bjork, a blond tackle from Oregon; and Dick Plasman, a big end from Vanderbilt who carried on the Hewitt "headgearless" tradition in what was at many times approximately the Hewitt manner.

Old "Stinky" himself was gone, however, gone in the trade for Francis, a deal Halas never quite forgave himself for making.

"I wouldn't have made it," he maintains, "except Bill insisted he was through with football. But, by golly, I should have known better. It wasn't in Bill to quit while he could still play and enjoy it."

The strange spell the Dallas Cotton Bowl exercised over the team the previous year still held in a preseason tune-up as Art Guepe of Marquette sloshed twenty-four yards through the mud to give an All-Star team a 6-to-0 decision in the rain. From that point on, however, the Bears began to gather mo-

mentum that sent them rolling once more into the championship play-off. Not a little of that impetus was provided by the shifting of Nolting from right to left half, where he proved as "natural" as a five and a two. Indeed, it was his running and punting that beat the Packers, 14 to 2, in the league opener.

The second meeting with the Packers attracted 44,977 to Wrigley Field and also brought the first defeat of the season, 24 to 14. The first touchdown was another of those Herber-to-Hutson masterpieces, this one covering an over-all span of seventy-eight yards, the pass itself eating up fifty of them. Green Bay led, 17 to 0, at the half, but the Bears charged back for two quick touchdowns and were on the march toward a third when a missed signal threw them into reverse and extinguished their flame.

A forty-six-yard touchdown run by Francis with an intercepted pass rekindled it in Detroit a week later in time to ruin a day staged in honor of Dutch Clark. The Flying Dutchman was bottled up like good bourbon all afternoon, and Manders kicked two field goals, as the Bears won 13 to 0.

Musso was so elated over this triumph that he raced into the clubhouse and grabbed a brand-new derby. Johnsos spied him and emitted a stricken cry, for he had purchased the hat only the day before to replace one the Moose had dispatched to the ash heap with an accurate drop kick.

"Look out!" Luke screamed. "Get away from there. Touch that hat, and it'll cost you five bucks!"

Musso roared with delight, recalling a game the previous season in which he had played at tackle alongside Johnsos at end. "Go on," he bellowed, "you still owe me plenty for holding you up last Thanksgiving Day. Why, those Lions took you so far out of every play that when you came back to line up the officials thought you were a new man reporting!"

After a few threatening gestures he reluctantly restored Johnsos' new hat to its hook, intact.

A 15-to-7 victory over the Rams clinched the Western Division title, but there remained the annual closing clash

with the Cardinals, a game for which the script must have been written by the Marx brothers. It contained everything from laughs to a fist fight in which, as usual, the peacemaker was the only one to get punched. It wound up in total darkness and with bonfires blazing here and there in the stands as congealed spectators strove in vain to keep warm. Only a chorus was lacking to spoil the musical-comedy aspect of the affair.

The Bears won, 42 to 28, the combined totals establishing a record for points scored in a single game. Other marks were set, too, 64 passes being thrown and 30 completed for 501 yards, but these were merely incidental happenings of a completely daffy day.

It was bitter cold; the field was frozen and covered with a solid coating of ice on the south end from the goal line out beyond the thirty. Both teams wore tennis shoes, but to no avail. Not even a mountain goat could have maintained his footing on such a surface. Hands and faces were slashed as if by razor blades from contact with the ice.

While the score was still close, Halas and Milan Creighton, the Cardinal coach, became embroiled in a violent dispute that wound up in a flurry of punches. Neither coach was so much as bruised, but an errant wild pitch thrown by one of them caught referee Bobie Cahn flush on the jaw. Little Bobie had absorbed lots of bumps in his years of officiating among the professional giants and took such happenings in good-humored stride. He simply chased the rival coaches back to the bench and ordered play resumed.

Creighton wasn't so lucky in an earlier brush with another official, Jim Durfee. The young Cardinal coach had stormed onto the field to protest a Durfee decision, and Jim had retaliated by stepping off a ten-yard penalty against him.

"What's that for?" demanded the indignant and apoplectic Creighton.

"That's for you running out here on the field," Durfee answered.

"That's not a ten-yard penalty," Creighton protested. "It should be fifteen yards."

"Yeah, I know," grinned the imperturbable Durfee, "but you're not worth that many!"

Once Halas and Creighton had calmed down and play had been resumed in this icy Bear-Cardinal clash, darkness began to fall, blanketing the field so rapidly and completely that soon the only thing visible from the stands was the white pants of the Cardinal players. Suddenly, from near one goal line, a pair of those white pants streaked off madly toward the opposite goal. A moment later, from the flickering light of grandstand bonfires, the players could be seen trooping from the field. Puzzled sports writers, in the dark in more ways than one, discovered what had happened only by visiting the dressing rooms.

The pants racing the length of the field belonged to Gaynell Tinsley. The Cardinal end had sprinted ninety-five yards on an end-around for a touchdown as the Bears wondered what in the world had become of the ball. When Tinsley crossed the Bear goal line the officials decided to award the Cardinals the extra point without going through the formality of kicking it, and then called the whole thing off. Exactly two minutes and fifty-one seconds of that game were never played.

Weather conditions were not much better for the championship play-off, a week later, but at least the game was started early enough so it could be completed in daylight. The eastern representatives were the Washington Redskins, introducing Sammy Baugh as their hatchet man for the first season. Sammy had led the 'Skins to a 49-to-14 rout of the strong Giants on the afternoon the Bears and Cards were playing blindman's buff, and on the strength of that showing were rated top-heavy favorites.

Baugh and his band arrived in Chicago two days before the title game to find the mercury shivering at zero and drastic measures being taken to put the field in something

resembling playing condition. Asphalt burners, fire-spreading machines used in pavement construction, were driven up and down the field to thaw the frozen surface. A thick blanket of hay then was spread over the field, and the whole topped with a tarpaulin. Thanks to these measures, the game was played under fair conditions, although the field was just icy enough to give the offense, especially the pass receivers, a half step to a step advantage. This, with Baugh throwing strikes all afternoon, was a distinct boon to the Redskins. Sammy hurled 34 passes that afternoon, completing 17 for 347 yards, three of them for third-period touchdowns that gave the title to Washington, 28 to 21.

It required only one play to convince the Bears they were in for a bad time with Sammy. After receiving the opening kickoff, the Bears were forced to punt, Nolting's fine kick rolling out of bounds on the Redskin nine yard line. Baugh dropped back into the end zone, and the Bears relaxed, expecting him to punt. They should have known better. Sammy faked his kick and shot a short, bullet pass to Cliff Battles in the flat, and the fleet halfback sped forty-two yards before he was trapped and brought to earth. More Baugh passes carried to the Bear seven yard line from where Battles ran for a touchdown on a reverse.

The Bears tied it on only four plays. Nolting made two yards, then Masterson passed to Manske for fifty-two. Nagurski hit the line for eight more, and Manders plowed the middle for ten and a touchdown. They scored again on just four plays, after Wilson intercepted a pass on the Washington forty-nine. The pay-off was a pass from Masterson to Manders, who caught the ball on the twenty, hesitated while Wilson brushed Battles out of the way, then cakewalked to the goal line.

That's the way things were, 14 to 7, until the fourth play of the third period, when Baugh went to work, flipping a touchdown pass of fifty-five yards to Wayne Millner. Nagurski led a Bear comeback march to the three yard line, from where

Masterson passed to Manske. The Bears' lead wasn't long-lived, for Riley Smith brought the kickoff out to the Redskin twenty-two, and on the next play Baugh fired to Millner for seventy-eight yards. Later he threw thirty-five yards to "Chug" Justice for the winning touchdown.

The Bears are firmly convinced they would have tied and perhaps won had it not been that luck turned its back on them in the closing minutes. Masterson passed to McDonald, who caught the ball on the thirty-two yard line with nary a Redskin in the vicinity and seemingly a clear path to the Washington goal line. But as McDonald turned to run, on the most slippery part of the field, he almost bumped into umpire Ed Cochrane. Cochrane, a Chicago sports writer, was limping because of a lame knee, and between that and the ice he couldn't dodge. Neither could McDonald. By the time he could switch gears and get started once more, Battles and Baugh had closed in on him and dragged him down on the twelve yard line.

So the season ended on an unhappy note, but the Bears had struck a delightful new note at the box office. A total of 155,000 fans had watched them play in league competition, and the entire National League had lured 1,176,476 through the turnstiles.

CHAPTER 18

A NEW ERA DAWNS

THE 1938 season saw the player limit raised to thirty men, but not even the increase in personnel could do much for the Bears, who slumped into one of their most disastrous years, winning six and losing five as Green Bay usurped their place as dominant team in the west. The boys couldn't even make the customary barnstorming tour at the year's end to pick up some extra money, for the National League in February adopted a rule prohibiting all postseason games with the exception of one involving the champion.

The reasons leading up to the decline of Bear power were obvious after a glance at the roster. Bronko Nagurski had carried out his threat to quit, Feathers had been traded to Brooklyn, and Keith Molesworth, the little scatback, had become backfield coach at the Naval Academy. The departure of these three necessitated a general overhauling of the offense, the streamlining including the abandonment of the single wing from which Feathers had galloped to his ground-gaining record.

As a replacement for Nagurski, Halas obtained Joe Maniaci from Brooklyn. The hot-tempered, volatile former Fordham star was an entirely different type of ball carrier, relying on speed rather than brute force, but he fitted into the remodeled offense to a T, mastering it so thoroughly he installed it when he became head coach of the Bainbridge Naval Station eleven during the war.

One of Joe's first reactions after being with the Bears long enough to become acquainted was to praise their spirit. "It's going to be fun playing with this team," he enthused. "Everybody pulls together on this outfit. I've never seen better

spirit." Joe absorbed it so completely that when the other Bears were in joyous clubhouse delirium following a thrilling victory over Green Bay the following year, he sat alone in a corner and wept because he had taken no part in the fashioning of the triumph, being side-lined with a leg injury.

Stepping into the regular Bear line-up were two players of contrasting physiques. Bobby Swisher, a halfback from Northwestern, was a slight, wiry lad immediately labeled "Streaky"; Dick Plasman, the towering sophomore end, was one of the biggest wing men in Bear history. Both were endowed with an overdose of competitive spirit and would have tackled a runaway locomotive in the heat of battle. In fact, Plasman actually did tackle a brick wall.

In the early moments of the Green Bay game in Wrigley Field that fall Plasman raced into the end zone after a forward pass. The throw was high and far, and his pursuit of it carried him into the southeast corner where the sweep of the grandstand and the protruding cover of the dugout slices several yards off the end zone. Dick realized he was in dangerous proximity to the wall, but he hurled himself through the air, and as the ball slid off his finger tips, crashed headlong into the bricks. Plasman played without a headgear, and players rushed to him fearing he had been killed. He sustained a broken right wrist and a gash in his scalp, but he was far from dead, as subsequent seasons were to prove.

Of the new men Lou Gordon also was outstanding, but Lou could hardly be classed as new for he had served long and brilliantly with the Cardinals and Packers. The lanky tackle who once captained the Illini found the change as good as a drink from the fountain of youth and made the Bears a valuable player as long as his trick knee held up. When it finally gave out, Lou turned full attention to his job as a Chicago policeman with week-end sessions of whistle blowing as a head linesman.

The most unusual achievement of the Bears of '38 lay not in offensive or defensive brilliance, but in their ability to

tamper with time. The United States government, instead of adopting universal daylight savings time as a wartime expedient, should have consulted the Bears and discovered how to lengthen a day without monkeying with the timepieces.

By actual measurement the Bears that fall stretched the last two minutes of three games, a total of six minutes, into almost one hour! They weren't clock watchers, they were watch stoppers.

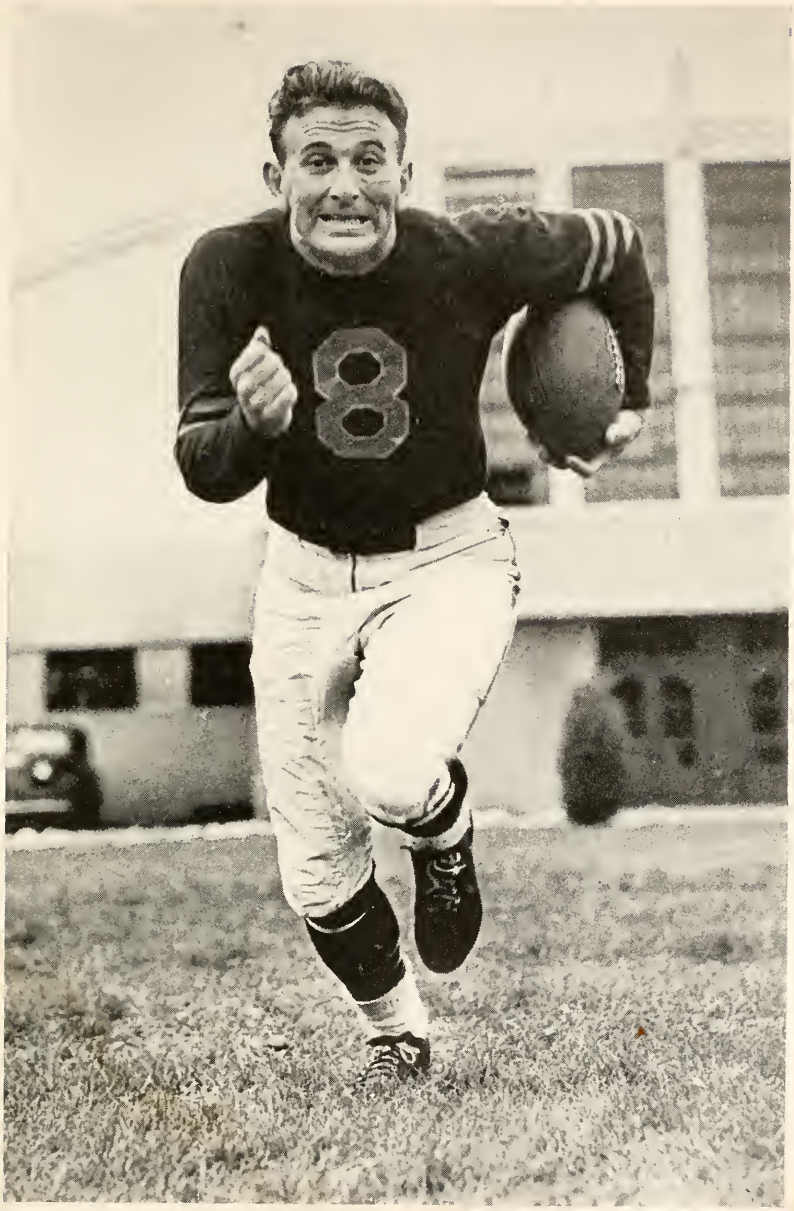
They accomplished this assault against time through a simple device—injuries. In those dying minutes of losing games the Bears would see to it that a player was "hurt" on every play. By this ruse they stopped the clock, which actually ran only while a play was in progress, for the rules called for time to be called in event of injury.

In those six elastic minutes twenty-seven Bears were "injured" and taken from the game. The whole affair became so laughable that Halas himself instituted a rules amendment at the next league meeting outlawing the practice. His move was hastened by an instance that found both Del Bjork and Danny Fortmann stretched out on the ground at the conclusion of a play. In dashed Russ Thompson to replace Bjork, who hobbled off the field with a mock limp that wasn't at all convincing. But here's the rub—Fortmann, who actually was hurt, had to remain in the game!

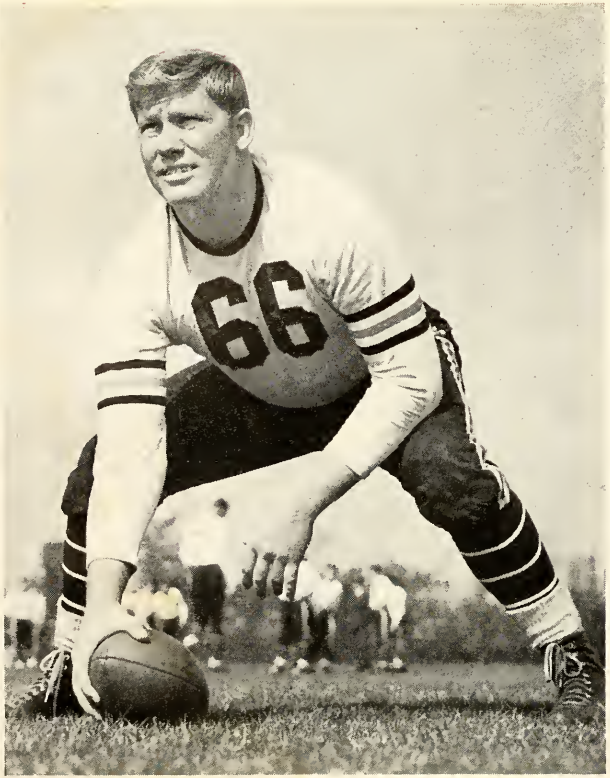
Most memorable of Bear victories that year was one achieved over the Cardinals by 34 to 28 and which the Cards inflicted on themselves through their own stubbornness.

In the final minute of the first half Dougal Russell of the Cards punted seventy-three yards, the ball rolling dead only a yard from the Bear goal line. Francis punted out to Russell, who came back only a few yards before throwing a lateral pass to Jack Robbins, who was tackled on the Bear thirty yard line. Almost immediately the gun sounded, and the Bears trooped off the field.

The Cardinals, however, remained in mid-field, where they clustered around the officials, arguing violently, contending



HUGH GALLARNEAU



The Bulldog—Clyde Turner

The Jack Rabbit—George McAfee

they had requested time out before the gun sounded and so were entitled to another play, which they wanted desperately inasmuch as the Bears were ahead at the moment by 14 to 7. Ed Cochrane, the referee, agreed. He said he had signaled for time out just before field judge Vern Lewellen, who had his eyes on the hands of his stop watch, had fired the gun.

By this time the Bears were in the clubhouse, and the fans in utter confusion. Couriers were dispatched to inform the surprised Bears that the half wasn't over after all and please to come back and finish it. So after much delay and many protestations, back they came, and the teams lined up on the thirty.

Everyone in the stands suspected that the Cardinals, after going to all this trouble to run one more play, would attempt a long pass on a gambler's chance for a touchdown. Possibly the Cards figured the Bears would think so too and could be caught napping, but whatever their reasoning they chose a running play with Robbins crashing into the line. As he lunged for the designated hole, Robbins fumbled, the ball squirting directly to Dick Bassi, Bear guard, who ran sixty-five yards for a touchdown!

The Bears, laughing so hard they had to hold their sides, retraced their steps to the clubhouse with their lead swollen to 20 to 7.

No chronicle of the Bears of '38 would be complete without a record of how Luke Johnsos, their assistant coach and grandstand quarterback, outsmarted himself. Luke had talked Bert Noelle, a fan long associated with the Bears, into matching coins for a steak dinner and had thought up a stratagem that seemed foolproof. He equipped himself with two coins, holding "heads" in one hand and "tails" in the other. There was but one flaw in the scheme—Luke forgot which coin was which. In sudden consternation he guessed wrong, and Noelle got a free meal.

The birth of the new year 1939 marked the dawn of the true Bear era in football for it brought to them Mr. Quarter-

back—Sid Luckman of Columbia—who was destined to turn the T into TNT and the story of whose signing and achievements will be dealt with in detail directly. It also brought Bill Osmanski from Holy Cross, a driving dervish of a fullback whose speed made him even more dangerous on wide runs than he was through the middle.

It also brought Billy Patterson, a Baylor back who didn't stay around long, and Bob Snyder, who remained a long time to take over Manders' job as kicker of extra points. He booted his way into the record book with eight points after touchdown against the Giants in 1943 for a single game high and with thirty-nine points after touchdown the same year for a season record. He missed only three attempts. Snyder was a veteran acquired by trade, and he served as Luckman's quarterback understudy, learning the T formation so thoroughly he helped install it at Notre Dame and with the Rams, whom he now serves as head coach.

Bob McLeod of Dartmouth joined the backfield forces, and the line acquired a really big addition in Jack Torrance, a weight thrower from Louisiana State who stood six feet three and scaled a svelte 312 pounds when he reported. The Halas training routine pared him down to approximately 280, but the giant was too easygoing for stardom, albeit he turned the tide of one or two games.

Missing from the '39 roster were such familiar names as Zeller, Karr, Francis, Bjork, and "Red" Conkright, a good center.

For the first thirty minutes of the traditional opener at Green Bay it appeared the Bears were on their way to a stunning victory, for they charged to a quick 13-to-0 lead. But in the second half they made three mistakes, and the Packers turned each into a touchdown and a 21-to-16 triumph. The Packers of that time were like the New York Yankees of the Babe Ruth–Lou Gehrig championship combination—make one mistake against them and they'd leap through the opening to beat your brains out.

The Cardinals, even when bolstered by the great Marshall Goldberg, were no match for the Bears and were crushed, 44 to 7, but the Giants called on Ward Cuff's toe for three field goals to snatch a 16-to-13 decision. This game was distinguished not by the score but by the emergence of Luckman as a T-formation quarterback. Making his professional debut before the homefolks in the Polo Grounds, Sid passed to both Bear touchdowns.

A defeat at the hands of the Lions sent the Bears into their return match with Green Bay in Chicago in November needing a victory to remain in the running for the division championship, and as if this weren't inspiration enough, the players were still mad clear through for having tossed away the first Packer game through mistakes. The stage was set for a thriller, and the cast didn't disappoint.

The Packers scored first on a seventy-one-yard runback of a punt by Joe Laws. One play after the succeeding kickoff, Swisher streaked forty-three yards for a touchdown, which tied the score. Six times the lead changed hands during a wild-and-woolly afternoon, and as the clock showed only a minute to play, the Bears were in front, 30 to 27, thanks to the brilliance of Osmanski. The rookie fullback had played all but a minute or so of the game. So had Danny Fortmann. Both were dog-tired, and after each of the final despairing Packer passes they'd struggle slowly to their feet, look longingly at the clock on the scoreboard, and wonder vaguely how they'd muster energy to climb the stairs to the clubhouse.

The Packers were on their own forty-four yard line, first down, with seconds to play, and the game hanging on the success or failure of one last pass. Cecil Isbell faded back, cocked his right arm, and let fly. Laws raced under the ball and caught it on the Bear thirty-two yard line, but as he turned to run he was bowled over by a vicious tackle. Simultaneously the gun barked, signaling a Bear victory.

The Bears relaxed, and as they did, away streaked Laws, heading for the Packer clubhouse with the ball. Joe was fast

and had a head start, but even before he reached the side line, Osmanski caught him. He, too, wanted that ball, symbol of his first day of professional stardom. Fortmann tore into what had mushroomed into a surging mass of players, wrestling and tugging, and wrapped his arms around the ball. The struggle might still be going on had not Dan Tehan, the head linesman, shouldered his way into the pile and confronted Fortmann.

"Gimme that ball," he ordered, "before I fine you twenty-five bucks!" Fortmann complied with alacrity, remarking, "Bill deserves it."

Tehan thought so, too, and before he changed to street clothes, he visited the Bears' clubhouse and presented the ball to Osmanski. It is still a treasured possession of Dr. William Osmanski, Chicago dentist.

A couple of weeks later Bill Hewitt returned to Wrigley Field in the uniform of an enemy for the first time. He wasn't the Hewitt of old, although he was still a lot of football player. He wasn't the star of his Philadelphia Eagles team either. That honor went to little Davey O'Brien, the half-pint forward passer. The Bears won the game handily, 27 to 14, but that wasn't little Davey's fault. He staged one of the finest imaginable demonstrations of the art of forward passing as he played 59 of the 60 minutes and threw 36 passes, of which 21 were complete for 247 yards, and only one was intercepted. The giant Bears, especially Stydahar, were so enamored by the little man's courage and marksmanship that they not only would help him to his feet after every play, but give him a hearty pat on the back for good measure.

Their season record of eight wins and three defeats left the Bears still a notch behind Green Bay, but it was obvious at the year's end that their remodeled machine was beginning to roll with Mr. Quarterback at the wheel.

CHAPTER 19

A BULLDOG AND A JACK RABBIT

FOOTBALL talent scouts from the big universities of the southwest a few years ago gave not much more than a cursory glance at a pleasant-appearing sixteen-year-old center in the graduating class at Sweetwater, Texas, high school. The youngster weighed only 160 pounds, and the unanimous verdict was, "He's too young, too spindly, and besides, he has too sweet a face."

Hardin-Simmons college wasn't so fussy about a freshman's size or insistent that five-o'clock shadow was essential to greatness in a football player, so the skinny sixteen-year-old kid enrolled there.

Four years later that young man was the Bears' number one choice in the draft of college talent for the 1940 season. Even then few realized what a coup Halas was making when he passed up the name backfield men and All-America forwards and from Abilene, Texas, plucked, of all things, a center, on his very first pick.

Who was Clyde "Bulldog" Turner?

It wasn't long before the football world knew only too well. The little fellow who was too skinny and too baby-faced to excite college scouts a few short years before came to the Bears, standing six feet, one inch, and weighing 235 pounds. He was fast as a featherweight, tough as a black-market steak, durable as iron. From the day he first appeared on the practice field it was apparent that here was the successor to Mel Hein as the top pivot man in football.

Dick Richards, the Lions' owner, who had been in the west for his health, had heard of Turner and wanted him. The Lions even gave Turner $150 so he could have some

urgent dental work done that winter of 1939–40. It was a costly gesture, for ere long Richards not only was out the $150 but also a heavy fine slapped on him by President Carl Storck for tampering with a player on the draft list of another club. Just at that time Richards was dickering for the sale of the Detroit franchise to Fred J. Mandel, Chicago merchant, and the league would not approve the deal until the fine was paid.

Richards' interest in Turner brings to mind an incident that happened in the wee small hours of the morning following the Bears' defeat in the rubber-shoe play-off of 1934. In a night spot just off Broadway there were gathered around a table a large and rather noisy group including Richards, Halas, Bronko Nagurski, Cliff Battles, and a couple of undersized sports writers.

"You know, Nagurski," said Richards with an appraising glance at the massive bulk across the table, "you're a menace to my ball club. Tell you what I'll do. I'll give you ten thousand dollars . . . not to play with the Lions, you understand . . . but to get the hell out of the league."

With a flourish Richards called for a pen and a blotter. Then he pulled out his checkbook and wrote a check for $10,000 payable to the order of Bronko Nagurski. Carefully he blotted it and slammed it down in the middle of the table with a triumphant "There!"

Nagurski was so dumfounded by this action that he sat transfixed for a moment like a man in a daze, then he reached for the check. But that instant's delay had been fatal. From the far end of the table Halas leaped like a man prodded vigorously with a hatpin, and snatched the paper from under the Bronk's very nose.

To be sure, Nagurski never got that $10,000, but he did get a healthy raise in his 1935 contract. Turner, five years later, was more fortunate. He got his teeth fixed at Richards' expense and a fat contract with the Bears as well.

When Turner reported to camp at Delafield in the fall of

1940, he found himself a member of one of the finest "freshman" classes ever assembled in good old Halas U. It included Lee Artoe and Ed Kolman, tackles, Ken Kavanaugh at end, and Harry Clark and Ray "Scooter" McLean, halfbacks. Above all it numbered a nimble-footed halfback from Duke University. His name was George McAfee.

The appearance of McAfee in camp must have come as a bit of a start to Halas, for it marked perhaps the first time he ever had come out a big winner in a deal with Bert Bell, who then operated the Philadelphia club and now is president of the National Football League. Halas and Bell forever were trying to outfox each other, and their arguments and lamentations furnished comic relief at every league meeting.

Each had a tremendous respect for the other and always insisted he had been finagled on the previous deal. In the end they actually outsmarted each other, for their trades led to the adoption by the league in December 1940 of a rule prohibiting the sale or trade of a team's first two selections in the player draft without the unanimous consent of the league until one season after the player's selection.

The first Halas-Bell deal followed Philadelphia's selection of Jay Berwanger in the draft of February 8, 1936. Berwanger, who was a football team in himself while winning All-America honors at the University of Chicago, was just a name in Philadelphia. To Chicago he was a personality, the greatest gate attraction since Grange. It was natural, therefore, for Halas to covet his contract. Bell at the time needed experienced linemen more than he needed a Berwanger, so he agreed to turn over the draft rights to the Maroon star in return for Art Buss, veteran tackle, and "Eggs" Manske.

Bell easily won the decision on this deal, for Berwanger chose not to play football but went into business as a salesman with a brief whirl as a sports writer on the side.

In 1937 Halas traded Hewitt to the Eagles for Sam Francis, and although the ex-Nebraska fullback was a capable performer for the Bears, Hewitt was a firebrand for the

Eagles. Bell, therefore, should be conceded an edge in that round.

When Tom Harmon ran his way into the headlines for the third straight year at Michigan, Bell again snatched at the nation's top name in the draft. Again he disposed of those draft rights to the Bears, acquiring in return two stalwart linemen, Dick Bassi and Russ Thompson. Harmon, of course, didn't turn pro until after the war when he signed with Los Angeles after the Bears had reached an agreement with the Rams by which they obtained a great tackle, Fred Davis.

The pattern was the same in the McAfee matter, Bell relinquishing his first selection in exchange for center Johnny Schiechl, tackle Milt Trost, and end Les McDonald.

"We had Davey O'Brien then," Bell explains, "and couldn't have used McAfee anyway. In all those years my club needed experienced players far more than it needed names. I made trades in order to acquire veterans to play among my kids and help hold the team together.

"The weak teams always had a tough time building up in those days. The war, however, proved a great equalizer. Most of the prewar veterans are through or nearing the end of their playing days. Rookies are playing against rookies now, and in consequence the teams are evenly matched."

McAfee dazzled the National League with his speed from the moment he won an exhibition game from Brooklyn by returning a punt seventy-five yards for the winning touchdown with thirty-seven seconds left to play. Not long afterward, while the players were dressing for practice, Luckman mounted a chair to deliver a spiel in the singsong chant of a circus barker.

"You've read it," he intoned, "you've seen it in the movies, but here it is in person—the one, the original, the only *Gone with the Wind!*"

McAfee made a playful lunge, but Luckman darted out of reach. That, of course, was exactly what McAfee had been

doing with the football to earn the sobriquet "One Play" McAfee. One play was about all he needed to score a touchdown from any place on the field.

He is elusive as a wisp of smoke, as slippery as a January sidewalk, the human exponent of fluid drive. His hip motion as he runs would shame a hula dancer, and he's as limber and loose as a phony handclasp.

What is the secret that makes him the greatest open-field runner football has produced? It's balance, he says, and he didn't acquire it until he came to the Bears, despite his fine record at Duke. His delayed development he blames on an operation he underwent while a junior at college for removal of a wart from one foot. Complications followed the surgery, and skin-grafting necessitated a long stay in the hospital.

What McAfee terms balance most people call co-ordination. There's rhythm in his every move, which explains why he can dipsy-doodle tacklers into knots, sprinting almost into their waiting arms, then whirling and side-stepping away, leaving the hypnotized tacklers with their arms full of empty air.

His speed when he joined the Bears was tremendous, for as a member of the track team at Duke he could run the 100-yard dash in 9.7 seconds. For football purposes he intensifies his speed through a ruse of his own devising.

In practice sessions throughout the week George wears regulation football shoes, but on Sundays when the Bears move into action he sheds them for lightweight oxfords.

"They make my feet feel like feathers," he chuckles. "It's almost as though I haven't any shoes on at all."

He runs like a thoroughbred, and small wonder, for he is as high-strung and spirited as Whirlaway or Armed. On game days he's so jittery he can swallow only a light breakfast and can't even bear the thought of dinner until ten or eleven o'clock at night. What he does to the opponents' digestion is even more appalling.

The building of the Bears was not confined to the playing

personnel, for the coaching staff also was remodeled into roughly the pattern it follows today. The most vital and enduring change was the addition of Heartley "Hunk" Anderson as line coach. Luke Johnsos remained as Halas' right-hand man, Red Grange returned to work with the backfield, and Fred Gillies was signed as a dollar-a-year advisory coach. Gillies, former Cornell great and for years a star lineman with the Cardinals, is a high-ranking executive of one of the nation's largest steel companies, but he couldn't get football out of his blood. He got back into the game to cure his nostalgia, and for a buck a year has added a wealth of ideas to the Bears' touchdown treasure.

The return of Anderson was a guarantee against any club's getting the better of the Bears in the line. There are those who contend Hunk left something to be desired as a head coach, but even his critics are quick to admit he has no peer as a builder of stalwart lines. Outplaying an Anderson-coached line is as unthinkable as it would be for a minor commissar to question the word of Joseph Stalin.

In his playing days with the Bears almost twenty years earlier Anderson wasn't a full-time employee. He was serving as an assistant coach to the immortal Knute Rockne at Notre Dame and would show up in Chicago only on Sunday mornings just in time to memorize a few new plays and climb into uniform. This system wasn't greatly changed by the passage of time, for Hunk now is in business in Detroit where he remains the first day or two of the week, then flies to Chicago to prepare his line for the next game. As soon as that game is out of the way he's back on a plane winging toward Detroit.

Football had been Anderson's life for almost two decades, yet now that it was reduced to a part interest, he began to get his greatest enjoyment and satisfaction out of the game. He had succeeded Rockne for a few unhappy years after the great coach's death in 1931, then spent periods at St. Louis University, North Carolina State, Michigan, Cincinnati, and

the Detroit Lions. The sale of the Detroit club to Mandel brought a wholesale change in the coaching staff, leaving Anderson without a football connection. It was then that Halas signed him to a one-year contract that has yet to run out.

With that coaching staff and a great collection of first-year men, Halas knew he had the makings of the best of all Bear teams, but it wasn't until the opening league game against Green Bay that it began to show signs of greatness. That it had its bad moments later is attested by three defeats, but in the end it arose to the heights in an afternoon of perfection such as a major football field will never see again.

The Packers, as befitting their rank as world champions, were 7-to-5 favorites when they kicked off against the Bears at Green Bay in the opener of the '40 season, and they looked the part briefly while Tiny Engebretsen kicked them into a 3-to-0 lead. Then their bright little world came crashing down around them.

McAfee tucked the succeeding kickoff under his arm and sped ninety-three yards to a touchdown in a dodging, twisting, galloping run that stamped him indelibly as the most dangerous game-breaking type of back to come into the league in years. Later he passed to his fellow rookie Kavanaugh for a second touchdown and ran nine yards for a third. Nolting, meanwhile, not to be outdone by a mere freshman, returned a Green Bay kickoff ninety-seven yards for a touchdown. The final score was 41 to 10, as lopsided and complete a walloping as the haughty Packers ever suffered.

After resting Monday and Tuesday, the Bears trotted out at Comiskey Park on Wednesday night to prove to a Chicago fandom that was still rubbing its eyes in disbelief over the Packer score just how good they really were. The fans were still rubbing their eyes in disbelief when they wound homeward near midnight. For the mighty new Bears had been soundly beaten by the Cardinals, 21 to 7. The reason? Call it an emotional letdown, physical weariness, or simply a

hustling Cardinal ball club. At any event the superman myth was shattered almost before it had formed around the Bears.

Cleveland, Detroit, and Brooklyn went down to defeat in quick succession, and Dr. John B. Sutherland, the Brooklyn coach, tabbed McAfee as "the best back I have seen this year."

The Giants weren't so sure a week later, for they had their troubles not so much with McAfee as with McLean. The little "Scooter" was delighting a group of rooters from St. Anselm's college by romping to two touchdowns, as the Bears rolled to a 37-to-21 victory. The big bad Bears were unstoppable in the first half, piling up a 30-to-0 lead, but they turned stone cold in the second half as tiny Eddie Miller threw them into consternation with 38 passes, of which 19 were completed for 252 yards.

High light of the game was a fifty-two-yard field goal by Artoe, a boot that inspired Sid Feder of the Associated Press to remark: "That Artoe is rightly named. The last syllable means something!"

The odd feature of this Gargantuan goal is that Artoe couldn't even see the goal posts at which he was aiming, to say nothing of the ball sailing high above the crossbar. The big tackle is nearsighted and wore glasses at all times except when actually scrimmaging. He'd even don them while sitting on the bench. His kick was only two yards short of Glen Presnell's league record set in 1934, but it could easily have been a record breaker, for it cleared the bar with plenty of room to spare, officials estimating it would have scored had the posts been ten yards further back.

Of all the thousands in the Polo Grounds Artoe was the last to know his kick was good for three points. He knew from the impact that he had given the ball a ride, but he didn't realize quite how far until he heard Halas' voice screaming, "It's over! It's over!"

Steve Owen, never one to alibi, had no excuses for the defeat of his Giants. "Pretty fair football team, those Bears,"

he admitted. "They've got everything. You get Maniaci out of there and what do you get? You get Famiglietti. If you think that's any bargain, you ought to try to stop him. I used to try personally to stop the Bronk, and this fellow runs just like him. He knocks your teeth out.

"And that Luckman! He's got his hands on the ball every play. You come in to stop Nolting or Famiglietti or McAfee, and that Sid throws it over your head. Yes, sir, they're a great team."

Both Osmanski and Maniaci were injured in that game, thus affording Famiglietti his first real opportunity to attract attention. He succeeded well enough, but Osmanski couldn't help kidding him a bit on the way home. "Cheer up, Gary," he said, pounding the big fellow on the back, "you probably will have to play sixty minutes against the Packers."

Famiglietti beamed. "That's fine," he grinned. "Then maybe I can hit the boss for a raise."

Gary didn't have to play the entire Packer game, but he did make one of the touchdowns by which the Bears kept rolling with a 14-to-7 victory. The real star of the game, however, was Bobby Swisher, fleet little halfback from Northwestern who looked so fragile you frequently found yourself hoping he wouldn't get killed playing among giants. Bob came off the bench in the second half, his body heavily taped to protect a couple of broken ribs, and knocked down three Packer passes in the end zone. He alone did a better job of covering the elusive Hutson than a three-man detail normally accomplished.

The following week the Bears had a 14-to-10 triumph all wrapped up and ready to deliver at Detroit when, with twenty-six seconds left in the ball game, Cotton Price threw a desperation pass that Lloyd Cardwell transformed into a touchdown and a 17-to-14 upset.

Noted as a rough team, the Bears lost this one through a penalty for unnecessary roughness, which should have been charged to overeagerness. Harry Clark, on the penultimate

play of the first half, was tackled only one scant foot from the Detroit goal line. Twenty-eight seconds remained, enough for touchdown purposes, or so the Bears thought as they leaped to their feet and dashed into the huddle.

Clark, however, still lay on the ground where he was pinned by an alert Lion who was trying to let as many precious seconds as possible tick away before the Bears could launch a play. As the Detroit player lay atop Clark, who was struggling futilely to rise, "Eggs" Manske, whom the Bears had reclaimed from the Eagles, sprinted over, spouting anger and frustration. He pulled and tugged at the Lion to free the trapped Clark—and for this he drew a fifteen-yard penalty.

The Bears have a club rule placing an automatic fine of fifty dollars against any player who commits a foul that costs the team precious yardage in the clutch. This was an exceptional case, for Manske was merely trying to crowd in that vital play and had the misfortune to have his motives misunderstood. Halas, however, stuck to the letter of the law and assessed the fine. The other Bears chipped in and gave the pot to Manske, and although "Papa Bear" never admitted as much, it was suspected he was a generous contributor.

Another defeat was awaiting them at Washington in a game that only intensified the unbelievable aspects of the events that were to transpire on the same gridiron three weeks later. The score of this one was Redskins, 7; Bears, 3; but what most fans failed to take into consideration when discussing the subsequent title game between the two teams was the fact that it was the hands of the clock, not those of Washington tacklers, that stopped the Bears that day.

With the clock showing forty seconds remaining, Bob Snyder told McAfee to "head for the goal line, I'll hit you with the ball." Snyder was a man of his word, McAfee grabbing his pass on the fifteen yard line and running to the one for a forty-nine-yard gain before Dick Todd tackled him.

Right here the Bears were hoist by their own petard, drawing a five-yard penalty for excessive times out, although McAfee was "injured" on the play and helped from the field. For years the Bears had been the most persistent employers of the old clock-beating gag.

The old rule declared that when an injured player was taken from the game, no time out was charged. However, to curb the Bears' constant circumvention of the rule it was amended to state that if a team has had only three previous times out in the half it can employ one additional time out in the last two minutes to remove an injured player, but if a team already has had four times out, not even an injury can save the penalty. The Bears already had been charged with four.

Thus were the Bears trapped by a rule change they themselves had brought about. There wasn't time enough for a running play unless time was called, and they couldn't call it without losing five yards.

The penalty set them back to the six yard line, thus precluding a running play. The Bears had to pass now, but passes don't use up many precious seconds, and there might be time for two. There was. Both fell incomplete, although the Bears insist till this day that Frank Filchock was guilty of interfering with Osmanski on the final play, pinioning his arms so he couldn't reach for a pass that bounced off his chest.

That defeat was a shock to the Bears, especially when they reviewed the scoring opportunities they had wasted.

"I've replayed this game three times already," said George Musso that evening. "I can find a dozen places where we should have scored the winning points, but try as I can, I can't make the final score anything but seven to three for Washington."

Then he grinned. "We'll remedy that next time," he added.

They sure did!

CHAPTER 20

73 TO 0

SUNDAY, December 8, 1940, was a beautiful day in Washington. The sun shone brilliantly and with a warmth surprisingly pleasant for the time of year. The sky was blue and cloudless. Scarcely a breeze rippled the flags over Griffith Stadium where 36,034 people clustered in quivering anticipation as their Redskins prepared to face the Bears for the championship.

Two hours later, although the sun still shone, it was the darkest day the nation's capital would know until another Sunday 364 days later when Jap bombs on Pearl Harbor plunged the United States into war.

The events that filled those two hours are unparalleled in sports history. They were so beyond comprehension that even those who saw them or took part in them have difficulty believing it wasn't a dream. To all but a handful of those 36,034 the dream was a nightmare, yet they left the park content. They were disappointed, certainly, but not unhappy. After all, they could tell their grandchildren that they had witnessed the impossible; that they had looked on perfection.

The Bears were perfection that day. There is no other explanation for the score that reads like a misprint in the record books: Chicago Bears, 73; Washington Redskins, 0.

The score itself is a story, but back of it is another one, a tale of psychology, of emotional uplift, of planning so meticulous that almost nothing was left to chance—except the fervent hope the Redskins would employ the same defense that had kept their goal line inviolate three weeks before.

Halas and his board of strategy knew from bitter experience that Washington was not a team to be taken lightly, for with Slingin' Sammy Baugh pitching passes, the Redskins were almost certain to score against the best of defenses. The trick was to keep Baugh from passing, in so far as that could be achieved. And the best way to keep Sammy from throwing touchdowns was to keep his hands off the ball as much as possible. If the Bears could control the ball throughout most of the afternoon they might be able to outscore the enemy.

With that in mind the faculty of Halas U. set about polishing their T until it shone. Movies of the Redskin defeat were studied over and over again. So were films of other Bear-Redskin games. From these showings and from the penciled notes in the coach's little black book were culled only the plays that had worked against Washington. These were perfected and refined; new variations were added; plays the Redskins had stopped were discarded and replaced by new ones calculated to take advantage of Coach Ray Flaherty's defense.

The players saw the movies almost as many times as did the coaches. Every play was analyzed—why this one worked, why that one didn't, what this mistake cost, what that good block accomplished. The Bears, seeing their previous mistakes pointed out on the screen, vowed they wouldn't happen again. Morning practice on the field was followed by chalk talks, lectures, written examinations on individual assignments, more movies. Clark Shaughnessy was brought in to discuss strategy with the quarterbacks—Luckman, Masterson, and Solly Sherman.

The greatest weapon Halas brought into play was psychology. The Redskins had made what Halas termed some "tactical vocal errors" after the earlier 7-to-3 victory, and now these were deftly turned against them. It seems that a club official with a careless disregard for the interpretation that might be placed on his words had been quoted in the public

prints as referring to the Bears by such uncomplimentary terms as "front runners" and "a first-half ball club." The Redskins themselves had called the Bears "crybabies" in the final minute of their earlier meeting.

When the Bears came to practice the Monday morning preceding the championship game, their eyes fell upon these disparagements of their courage and staying power plastering the walls of the clubhouse. The reaction was terrific. Mutterings grew to shouts of revenge. The boys were mad clear through. Halas kept them that way, reminding them that Washington regarded them as quitters a final time in his between-halves speech even though the score at that time was Bears, 28; Washington 0.

Get one of the 1940 Bears into conversation today about that week of drill and the game itself, and you'll find him turning slightly hysterical, his voice rising in excitement and his eyes flashing.

"I've never experienced anything like it," Luckman admits with a look almost of wonder. "There was a feeling of tension in the air as though something tremendous was about to happen."

That feeling was apparent on the train en route to Washington. Ball players customarily while away train rides by playing cards or sitting around swapping stories. There is laughing, joking, wisecracks, fun. But not this time. There was no laughter, no frolicking, not a single deck of cards in sight. The Bears sat huddled in their seats, notebooks on their laps, studying!

One bit of superstition crept in, too. For luck the Bears moved from their usual Washington hotel to another, a shift Secretary Frank Halas believes entitles him to a share of credit for the momentous events that were in store.

The opening whistle unleashed a Bear attack that was concentrated fury. The kickoff sailed into the arms of Nolting, who sprinted back twenty-two yards to the twenty-four yard line. In the huddle Luckman called a "feeler," the first

four Bear offensive plays having been charted long before to test the Redskin defense. Was it the same as before? Everything depended on the answer to that question.

Kavanaugh, at left end, went eighteen yards out on the flank, and the Washington right halfback followed him out. Nolting, at left half, went in motion to the right, and the Redskin backer-up trailed him out. That was all Luckman wanted to see. The Washington defense was unchanged. On the play McAfee bolted between guard and tackle for eight yards.

On the next play the left end again went wide but McAfee, the right half, went in motion to his left. Luckman, making a reverse pivot, gave the ball to Osmanski on a run to the spread side.

"Bill was really driving when I handed off that ball to him," Luckman grins. "I knew he was going someplace in a hurry."

That someplace was sixty-eight yards to a touchdown!

Here, however, is a secret never before revealed about that play—it didn't go according to plan or blueprint. Actually it called for a straight slant off tackle, but McAfee's block hadn't flattened the Redskin right end.

"George had him blocked off," says Osmanski, "but he was reaching out with his hands, and I was afraid he could grab me, so I just made a sort of dip and went out wide around end." That dip, incidentally, is now a charted play in the Bears' book.

Osmanski, who was possessed of jet-propulsion acceleration, streaked away as Musso, pulling out from right guard to join the interference, flattened the up man in the secondary. Near the Washington thirty-five yard line Osmanski was walking a tightrope down the south side line with Ed "Chug" Justice and Jimmy Johnston closing in on him. Osmanski saw them, but what neither he nor the two Redskins saw was George Wilson, cutting across from his position at right end, whizzing like a tornado into their path.

Just as Justice set himself to tackle Osmanski, Wilson hurtled into him from the blind side with such force the impact could be felt in the stands.

"I've never seen a block like it," Halas maintains.

It knocked Justice into Johnston and both of them into a cartwheel that sent them rolling out of the field of play. Both had to be helped to their feet. As a parlay it was a knockout.

Osmanski, of course, simply kept running. As he flashed over the last white line and into the end zone with a touchdown, the big scoreboard clock showed just fifty-five seconds of playing time elapsed. Jack Manders kicked the extra point, but the parade wasn't on—not quite yet.

Max Krause, who is so much a Redskin at heart that he served as their water boy at times while he was in the Navy and too old and too busy to play football, took the next kickoff and promptly scared the Bears half to death. Straight down field he raced for sixty-two yards before he was finally tackled on the Bear thirty-two yard line. Then came the play that turned the ball game and set the Bear adding machine in motion.

Baugh faded back and shot a long pass to Charlie Malone. The big end was in the clear with a touchdown and an almost certain tie score in his grasp—but he dropped the ball. And as that pass trickled off his finger tips, Fate turned her back on the Redskins. Had Malone caught the ball the game might have been the nip-and-tuck, slam-bang affair a championship is supposed to be. As it was, the Redskins never again were a factor.

No one suspected that such was the case even when Bob Masterson missed a field goal attempt from the thirty-two yard line, but the handwriting soon became legible on the wall. The Bears put it there with a magnificent display of power football that swept eighty yards in seventeen plays and four first downs without the use of a pass. Luckman scored the touchdown on a sneak of about a foot under

Bulldog Turner. Bob Snyder came in for Osmanski to add the point and make the score 14 to 0.

The Redskins, startled and shocked into desperation, tried three fruitless passes after receiving the kickoff, then were forced to punt, Luckman coming back to the Washington forty-two. Here Luckman called for almost the identical play on which Osmanski had made his great run. This time, however, Joe Maniaci was the fullback, and instead of taking the ball on a hand-off, he got it on a shovel pass. Otherwise the pattern was almost identical, for Maniaci didn't stop running until he had touchdown number three. Phil Martinovich converted, making it three different Bears to add a point after each of three scores.

Twelve minutes and forty seconds had been ticked off on the clock, and the scoreboard read: Bears, 21; Redskins, 0.

Still another touchdown was added before the end of the half, Kavanaugh leaping in the corner of the end zone behind Frank Filchock and Andy Farkas to catch Luckman's thirty-yard pass. Snyder kicked the twenty-eighth point.

The Redskins still refused to concede defeat and came out for the second half charged with new spirit. Wee Willie Wilkin, the gigantic blond tackle, in particular was a heroic figure until he was led off the field late in the game, crying in anger and humiliation.

But if the Redskins were fired by the half-time revival, so were the Bears. Halas' brief oration dwelt solely on the premise that Washington regarded the Bears strictly as a "first-half ball club" and "quitters."

They quickly proved this to be a myth. On the second play of the third period Baugh attempted a short pass to fullback Johnston in the flat, but Hampton Pool, the Bear end, sensed the play, batted the ball into the air, caught it, and sped fifteen yards to a touchdown. He had scored before most of the Redskins knew anything was amiss.

That was the *coup de grâce*. The Redskins were done. You could see them wilt before your eyes as the fire and

spark and spirit drained out of them like air from a punctured tire.

Three more Bear touchdowns clattered across in the third period. Nolting collected the first when he bolted through a quick-opening hole inside the Washington right tackle and scooted twenty-three yards. Two plays after the ensuing kickoff McAfee intercepted a pass by Roy Zimmerman and zigzagged thirty-four yards behind fine blocking to plant the ball in the end zone. Another Zimmerman pass boomeranged later, Turner intercepting this one and going twenty-one yards to score, aided by a furious block with which Pool removed the unhappy Zimmerman from the picture.

The fourth quarter brought more of the same as the "first-half ball club" made it seven touchdowns for the second half. Harry Clark started it with a forty-four-yard run in the course of which he powered his way right out of Filchock's tackle on the ten yard line.

The Redskins received once more, and immediately things went wrong for them again. A pass from center got away from Filchock, and Turner recovered only two yards from the goal line. Famiglietti bridged this gap in one drive.

At just about this precise moment the public address loudspeakers boomed forth with what was probably the most ill-advised and poorly timed announcement ever made. "Those who wish to purchase season tickets for next year . . . ," came the brassy voice, only to be lost in a cascade of boos and catcalls. Strangely enough those boos meant nothing, for the Redskin advance sale for the '41 season had set a new high by Christmas.

Again the Bears kicked off, and this time the Redskins held possession of the football for only one play. The second one was a pass by Filchock, and Maniaci stepped into its path, returning twenty-one yards to Washington's forty-two yard line. From there the Bears turned on the power, with

Clark picking up the final yard and the last points of a historic afternoon.

Dick Plasman and Joe Stydahar added extra points from placement in this half with Maniaci getting another on a pass from Sherman. By this time the Bears didn't care much whether they kicked extra points or not, while the officials and the Washington ball club were hoping they wouldn't.

Every placement kick, as propelled by the strong and accurate toes of the Bears, sailed into the stands back of the goal posts and didn't return. The fans kept the balls as souvenirs. This was fine up to a point, but as the score mounted the stock pile of footballs dwindled. When all the new balls purchased especially for the game were gone, the Redskins brought some of their old practice balls into play. These, too, soon were about gone, and matters reached alarming proportions. After all, what is a championship football game without a football?

So it was that after the last two touchdowns officials asked the Bears please not to kick for the point. Sherman, an obliging fellow, tried passing for two points, one of which scored.

In the course of compiling this astronomical score the Bears gained 372 yards rushing to Washington's 3. But this wasn't the only unusual phase of the statistics. The Redskins, the top offensive team in the league, had been held scoreless for the first time. The Bears divided their eleven touchdowns among ten men, Clark being the only repeater. In all, sixteen Bears shared in the point production, six having a hand (or a toe) in conversions. Eight Washington passes were intercepted.

The Bears never let up. So tensely were they keyed for the game that even late in the fourth period players leaving the field would whack their substitutes resoundingly on the seat of their silk pants and exhort: "Pour it on 'em. Don't let up. Pour it on!" They kept on pouring their T until the cup ran over.

Superlatives fairly drooled off the typewriters of the na-

tion's top sports writers as they reached in vain for words to describe the game. Typical of the accolades was that given in a Washington newspaper by "Dutch" Bergman, then coach at Catholic University.

"I saw the perfect football team in the Bears," Bergman wrote. "I have been associated with the game as player and coach for twenty-five years, but never in that time did I ever see a team that did everything perfectly, with such flawless execution, as did the Bears in humbling the Redskins."

Phil Handler, line coach of the Cardinals, shook his head and muttered, "I've never seen anything like it and never will again."

Steve Owen, whose Giants had finished third in their division, breathed a sigh of relief. "Now I'm glad we didn't win the eastern championship," he said. "In fact, I'm glad we didn't finish second. Even that would have been too close to the Bears."

Halas, over the radio, made a masterpiece of understatement. "My team played a great game," he told the armchair spectators. "I think they deserved to win."

The bark of the gun ending the massacre caused some press-box wit to remark, "Marshall just shot himself." The Redskins' owner hadn't gone to such lengths, but he was heartbroken, shamefaced, and completely at a loss to account for the holocaust. In the depth of his disappointment and chagrin he was bitter against some of his players.

"The tackling and blocking by some of those high-salaried backs of mine was something to watch," he said. "I don't know what they were thinking about. Maybe they were too busy looking over the crowd and trying to estimate their shares. My team quit, just plain quit. There'll be plenty of changes made before next year."

Of all the odd factors surrounding this game one of the strangest is the restraint exercised by a group of sports writers who had been in a fanning bee with Marshall a day or two before. In discussing the pro league's play over the sea-

son Marshall had declared: "The trouble with the league right now is that the strength is concentrated in the east."

Poor George! No one was hardhearted enough to remind him of that statement afterward.

The next day, as the Bears rode triumphantly home with bruises, a championship, and a few hang-overs, a Pullman passenger looked with interest at the rainbow decorating Danny Fortmann's left eye.

"My, my," he clucked sympathetically, "that's a terrible black eye you have there."

"Yes," Fortmann agreed, "but it will disappear in a day or two. Think of the Redskins—that seventy-three-to-nothing score is in the record books for all time!"

Here are the statistics of that game:

	Chicago	Washington
First downs	18	16
First downs rushing	14	3
First downs passing	3	10
First downs penalties	1	3
Yards gained	492	232
Rushing	372	3
Passing	120	229
Forward passes	8	49
Passes completed	6	21
Passes intercepted by	8	0
Intercepted passes returned (yards)	116	0
Number of punts	2	3
Average distance punts	45	42
Yards punts returned	27	6
Number of penalties	5	5
Yards penalized	35	65
Number of fumbles	4	5
Opponents' fumbles recovered	1	0

CHAPTER 21

THE BEARS' GOOD LUCKMAN

THE first time Sid Luckman ever saw the T formation it was on paper, in a hotel room in August 1939, two weeks before he was to become an actual Chicago Bear.

Luckman was fresh from the campus of Columbia University, a three-year All-American left halfback and one of the nation's great college passers.

Not only had he never seen the T, he had never been west of Buffalo, New York. The wild and woolly West—west of the Hudson River, that is—and the Bears were merely things he had read about on the inside pages of the New York sports sections.

But here he was in Chicago, a top choice to face his neighbors, the New York Giants, as a starting back for the 1939 College All-Stars. Sid, a Bear by contract, was not scheduled to report to the Delafield, Wisconsin, training camp for almost a month. Assistant Coach Luke Johnsos, just to give him an idea of how the Bears played football, suggested a brief camp preview.

Sid took one look at the Bear plays and shuddered.

"Migawsh, Luke, look!" he screamed. "Those halfbacks go through that line all alone. That's the most stupid thing I ever saw. Those big pro linemen will kill 'em. They'll get murdered!"

Johnsos laughed. "Don't *you* worry about it a bit, Sid. Halas is going to make a quarterback out of *you*. Besides, as fast as those halfbacks get killed, we'll send in a new one for you."

In the eight years Sid Luckman has been a Chicago Bear, not one halfback ever has been killed, but George Halas did

make him a quarterback, and today he is rated the greatest T-formation field general of all time.

Luckman was a Bear long before he finished playing football for Lou Little at Columbia, although Sid never knew it. In fact, he was a Bear while he was the triple-threat star at Brooklyn's Erasmus High School way back in 1933–34. Word had trickled through to Halas' famed sanctum sanctorum, the Burgundy Room, so called because of the color of the carpeting in the Bears' Wabash Avenue headquarters, that this black-haired, quiet, chunky Jewish kid from the streets of Brooklyn was something for the future book.

Each time Luckman threw a pass, ran an end, kicked a punt out of bounds on the five yard line for Columbia, a new entry was made in the big book in the Burgundy Room. Then, in his final collegiate season—1938—the Bears were positive. He started a great year against Yale and Eli Coach "Ducky" Pond admitted he had nightmares about Luckman for months afterward.

"It was the greatest one-man football show I have ever seen in Yale Bowl," Pond confessed.

It was understood among the rest of the National Football League clubs that Luckman would go to the Bears when the annual college draft came up in December 1938. In fact, Halas made sure they understood. He offered the Pittsburgh Steelers, who had first choice that year, a fine end, if they would name Luckman their number one choice, then trade him to the Bears. The Steelers agreed, and Luckman came to Chicago.

That type of trading is taboo in the N.F.L. these days, but it was good business back in 1938.

Tim Mara and Steve Owen of the New York Giants made halfhearted overtures to get Luckman from the Bears by bargaining, but it was no soap.

Dan Topping, of the Brooklyn Dodgers, was more outspoken. "I'll give Halas every man on my ball club for Luck-

man," he told a sports writer, "and be glad to start from scratch."

But Halas had too many plans for the Brooklyn kid, and to this day Luckman has been one of the few Bears who has never been on the trading block or in the sales mart for love or money.

There were moments in 1939, however, when it was feared Luckman never would be a Bear or chattel of any other professional football team. The routine Bear form letter mailed out in January 1939, notifying Sid he had been selected in the draft by the Chicago club, asked the usual questions: Was he interested in pro football? What was his reaction to playing in Chicago, etc.

Luckman wrote back immediately: "I have no intention of playing professional football. In fact, I have been advised against it. My plans are to enter the trucking business with my brothers."

That called for as much strategy in the Halas plotting room as any preparations for the Green Bay Packers. Halas sat down to write what has been described as a classic in salesmanship. By the time Sid read the first five paragraphs, he was off to his friend and former coach, Lou Little, to ask whether he thought this "guy Halas was on the up-and-up." Little thought he was, and Luckman immediately wrote back asking for a face-to-face interview.

Even then, it took several months of negotiating, but on July 24, 1939, Luckman was officially a Bear.

The day after the All-Star game he reported to the Delafield camp literally scared stiff. He remembered that notebook full of plays Johnsos had showed him, and the remark that as fast as halfbacks were killed, Halas sent in a new one. How did he know Halas really would make a quarterback out of him?

It didn't help a bit when Sid got his first trial as understudy to Bernie Masterson, then the number one model of the T quarterback. Luckman fumbled, tripped over his own feet on

the pivots, bobbled the vital hand-offs, and generally looked like two other guys.

Halas tried his best to brush off the disappointing exhibition as stage fright. But after two or three weeks of it, the Bear board of strategy figured an alternative. Luckman wasn't going to do them any good at quarterback for a while, so they'd throw him in at his college post, left halfback and as signal caller on a special Notre Dame box backfield.

His mates were rookie Bill Osmanski, fullback; rookie Bob McLeod at right half, and Gary Famiglietti at blocking back. It meant a completely new set of blocking assignments and signals, but it had to be done.

The first and last profit from the Notre Dame box backfield in the Chicago Bears' 1939 campaign was against Cleveland. Sid and his three pals entered the battle in the second half and beat the Rams, 35 to 21. From that day, however, the plan was scrapped. Halas decided to take his chances on Luckman as a T quarterback.

"We figure Luckman was 'born' as our regular quarterback," Halas explains, "in the 1939 Green Bay game at Wrigley Field. We beat 'em, 30 to 27, and Luckman gave what probably is one of the finest exhibitions ever seen in Chicago, offense and defense.

"It was Luckman's first victory over the Packers and his first as a T quarterback. He even threw the winning touchdown, a pass to McLeod."

Luckman has been the Bears' number one quarterback ever since, to the sorrow of every other coach in the National Football League.

"Luckman," confessed Curly Lambeau of Green Bay, "alone has beaten the Packers more than any other one man we've played against in twenty-seven years. For the last seven years I've picked up the paper every day hoping the guy had decided to quit football."

The statistics bear out Lambeau's contention. Since that 1939 thriller at Wrigley Field, the Packers have beaten Luck-

man only three times in sixteen starts. They lost twelve and tied one. Two of the Packers' three victories came during the disastrous war years of 1944 and 1945. Even then, Luckman and the Bears turned the tables in the return games at Wrigley Field both seasons. The third victory was the famous 16-to-14 win in 1941 forcing a play-off for the Western Division title, which the Bears won going away, 33 to 14.

"I was just getting the idea of the T then," Luckman grins. "But chances are I won't really know the Bear T until I'm about to retire."

Luckman's modesty is not a false one. He used to spend hours practicing pivots, feints, hand-offs, and ball-handling in the dressing room, at home, in hotels on road trips, and even between seasons. He still does.

The Bears figure it takes about three seasons to make a quarterback under their system. Luckman learned it forward and backward in one! He knew every assignment of every man on every play, and there are some four hundred plays, including variations, in the Bear portfolio.

Today he still reports a month in advance of the squad, sits down with Halas and Johnsos to study the new Bear strategies, to check movies of past games, to learn more and more of the weaknesses of rival teams and individuals.

Two weeks of that, and he returns home to master the plays, so that by the time Luckman reports to training camp, he is a quarterback who coaches, too.

The story is apocryphal, but there are people who insist Luckman hasn't had a signal checked in six years. Figure he called sixty plays a game, fourteen games a year, for six years, and true or not, it's still a lot of signals to run through one quarterback's head.

He has an infallible memory on plays, and even his coaches marvel, and sometimes scream, at his football imagination. But they claim he thinks so far ahead of his opponents and even his own teammates that he can imagine anything he wants as long as he continues to win games.

His first experience at outsmarting the opposition, incidentally, was his New York debut as a professional against the Giants in 1939. As everyone knows, the Bears use quick-opening stuff with devastating effects. Steve Owen, at the time, used the huddle on defense as well as offense. Luckman spotted it immediately and looked ahead to the first time the Bears got the ball.

Johnsos agreed. "Try two quick plays, Sid," Johnsos said, "and let's see what happens."

The Bears took the kickoff, ran it back a few yards, then lined up for their first play. There stood the Giants in a defensive huddle, and before they knew what was going on, Luckman was off on a thirty-five-yard gain. The same thing happened the next time, for thirty more yards.

"Owen has never used the defensive huddle since," both Luckman and Johnsos chuckle.

With Luckman just learning the ropes under the T the Bears finished 1939 with an eight, three, and nothing record, second best to Green Bay. Sid managed to rack up 636 yards and two touchdowns via passing.

But from that year on, as Luckman went, so went the Bears. The 1940 season brought two major landmarks in Bear history: Luckman proved he had come to stay, and the Bears murdered the Washington Redskins, 73 to 0, for the first of four world championships the Monsters have won with the kid from Brooklyn at the helm.

Oddly enough, Sid was directly involved in only two of the deluge of touchdowns against Washington. He ended an eighty-yard drive by sneaking over from one yard out, and he passed thirty yards to Ken Kavanaugh.

The Bears made it two titles in a row in 1941, and Sid failed to net a single touchdown by air in a 37-to-9 rout of the Giants. But he was making his mark among the passers. They were even beginning to call him "another Sammy Baugh." He made almost all N.F.L. honor elevens in his third season, and he's been on them every year since, with the

exception of horrible 1945, when no Bear was honored for the second time in history.

Championship games were becoming an annual habit in the Bear household by now. They won the Western Division title again in 1942 only to lose to the Redskins, 14 to 6, in the play-off. And they did a repeat in 1943, gaining revenge with a rousing 41-to-21 decision over Mr. Marshall's tribe, and it was really Luckman's day.

The Bears had waited a month before Washington and New York settled the eastern race, and the fidgety Luckman literally was on a leash. Dire plots were laid in the chill of Wrigley Field those four weeks, and it was customary to see Luckman with his nose to the grindstone far into the night with Johnsos, Hunk Anderson, and Paddy Driscoll, the coaching triumvirate during the war years. All this preparation paid off the day after Christmas, 1943. Luckman set a new one-game play-off record by passing for five touchdowns—thirty-one and sixteen yards to Harry Clark, thirty-six and sixty-six to Dante Magnani, and twenty-nine yards to Jim Benton.

It climaxed what has been called the greatest passing year in the history of the Bears, Luckman, and the N.F.L. Sid smashed records as fast as they popped up.

He earned a huge chunk of his 1943 totals against the New York Giants in a 56-to-7 rout of Mara's men. Seven times he hit receivers with touchdown passes to break a mark set by Baugh just two weeks before. Another Baugh record set the same day fell when Luckman totaled 433 yards for the largest passing yardage ever recorded in one afternoon.

"Strictly luck," Luckman explained afterward. "All I could think of when that seventh touchdown went in was the day I saw Lou Gehrig hit four home runs in Yankee Stadium.

"You've got to give the Bear organization credit for all this. They have the feeling they are the best football team in the world, and they go out every Sunday to prove it."

When the 1943 season ended, with Sid Luckman now an

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START OF A 73-TO-0 ROUT

Bill Osmanski starts on 68-yard touchdown run against the Washington Redskins in 1940 championship game. Ed Justice (13) and Jimmy Johnston (31) were removed from the play simultaneously later by George Wilson's historic "parlay" block.

© George Burke Photo

1941 World Champions

Sometimes called the greatest football team of all time, these Bears are (*left to right*), back row: Driscoll, Artoe, Mihal, Musso, Maniaci, Pool, Kavanaugh, Federovich, Stydahar, Famiglietti, Lotshaw, Frank Halas. Third row: George Halas, Dr. John Davis, Standlee, Forte, Siegal, Turner, Kolman, Matuza, Anderson, Johnsos, Cole. Second row: Plasman, Nolting, Wilson, Bray, Fortmann, Nowaskey, Osmanski, McAfee, Luckman, Snyder, Manders. Front row: Hughes, Lahar, Gallarneau, Bussey, Swisher, McLean, Clark, Baisi, Wykowski.

ensign in the Merchant Marine stationed at Sheepshead Bay, New York, the chunky kid from Brooklyn who had just passed his twenty-seventh birthday became the first Bear ever to win the Joe Carr Memorial Trophy as the most valuable player of the year.

Two vital records were his—the 2,194 yards and 28 touchdowns he had generated in the air were all-time highs for one season.

The rumors were now circulating that this was Luckman's last campaign as a pro gridder. By early 1944 everyone was sure. Luckman was assigned to a tanker plying the Atlantic, with German submarines and mines a dime a dozen. He served eight months of hazardous sea duty, and the 1944 College All-Star game in Chicago seemed as remote as the war's end. But by mid-August Luckman received permission to report to the Bears' training camp for this "one last game."

The Bears were hard hit by loss of key personnel for that game, and even Luckman's surprise appearance didn't boost the odds any. No one will ever admit it in the Bear ménage, but it was not exactly a Bear year.

By the end of the first period that was obvious. The All-Stars rushed to a 14-to-0 lead, and everything the Bears did was wrong. The line loafed; it went through the motions of playing a football game in the rain.

As the second period began, Anderson sent Luckman in with a prayer that maybe Sid could "coach the boys into at least looking like the fabulous Bears." Sid merely called time, then took off his helmet and delivered a speech that would have done justice to Boss Halas, far out in the Pacific Ocean.

"I'll give you guys just one more chance," he snarled. "Wake up and move, or I'll walk right off the field. Where did you phonies get these Bear uniforms, anyway? Steal 'em? Those suits belong to the Chicago Bears, a professional football team and champions of the world.

"They're not supposed to be worn by punks."

The half-time score was 14 to 14, Luckman himself passing

twelve yards to Benton to knot it up. It made no difference when Lou Saban of the Collegians plunged a yard for another touchdown that tied the score at 21 to 21 later. Luckman maneuvered his team to the Stars' thirteen, then called on guard Pete Gudauskas for a fourth-quarter field goal. Pete's kick was perfect, and the Bears held on to win, 24 to 21.

It has been said that many of Luckman's touchdowns and plays are called high in the stands by the Bears' grandstand quarterback, Johnsos. Luckman will agree. Most of his strategic effectiveness is really due to Luke's ability to spot the enemy's weak points. But that same All-Star game at Dyche Stadium, Evanston, in 1944, is a prime piece of evidence that Luckman thinks, acts, and plays football as a Bear should with some improvements of his own.

It was a moment before the final period ended. The Bears had possession, wind and rain at their backs. It was third down, the Bears on their own forty, and unless something happened, the Stars would have the wind and the ball in Bear territory, which meant almost sure defeat.

There wasn't time for even Johnsos to phone down instructions. Anderson openly prayed on the bench, muttering aloud: "C'mon, Sid. McEnulty to fullback, quick kick. McEnulty to fullback, quick kick." Anderson kept it up until it sounded like a chant. Then he closed his eyes, whispering it over and over.

When he looked again, there was McEnulty shifting over from wing back to fullback, and the quick kick was off, over Glenn Dobbs, who eventually picked it up in the end zone, tried to run it back in the mud, but was nailed dead on his own five yard line. That ended the All-Stars. They never came close again.

Luckman was a part-time Bear for the year. For a moment in September 1944, however, he almost quit football for good. The occasion was the opening game at Green Bay, where a few hotheads resented the fact Luckman had been granted a

week-end leave from the Merchant Marine to compete. Actually, it was reported he was "on orders" to play.

Boos echoed from the crowd as Luckman trotted onto the field with the rest of the Bears. Sid was sure they were meant for him. They weren't. The Bears have a propensity for drawing boos at Green Bay, and it took all the persuasive powers of Johnsos to convince Luckman to play.

"Hell, Sid," Johnsos bellowed, "they'd boo Lambeau if he said hello to a Bear!"

It didn't help Sid when Green Bay rushed off to a 28-to-o lead, but the salt was wearing off when he passed for three straight touchdowns and set up the fourth for Bob Margarita from the Packer five to tie it, 28 to 28. Eventually, the Packers won, 42 to 28, but Luckman grinned it off.

"The bums," he muttered, just like in Brooklyn, "we made the bums earn it, anyway."

Luckman in 1945 learned for the first time how tough it could be with little but a few names in front of him. The Bears lost their first five league games, and Luckman had the grand total of two touchdowns by air. He was definitely in a slump, and that called for a shot of the famous Bear psychology. Anderson made it clear to newsmen that Sid was benched for the Green Bay game, November 4. Veteran Gene Ronzani would start at quarterback.

Sid believed it. He shook his head sadly.

"This looks like it," he said. "I'm all through now. When the Bears bench a guy, he's benched. I know. I've seen a lot of guys go that way."

That Sunday morning Sid even planned to turn in his uniform. It took an old friend and adviser, Clark Shaughnessy, Sr., Johnsos, and practically the whole Bear team to convince Sid he should at least sit on the bench. When he got off the bench, he was at such a high pitch emotionally that he engineered the upset of the year, the Bears ending the humiliating slump by nicking their ancient rival, 28 to 24.

The Bears went deeper than nowhere in 1945, but Luck-

man shared the passing title—his first championship—with Baugh and led the league in touchdowns by air (14) and yardage (1,725).

He reported to the Collegeville, Indiana, camp at St. Joseph's College in 1946 in the best condition of his Bear career. Things were different. McAfee, Gallarneau, Turner, Stydahar, Osmanski, Kavanaugh, Kolman, and Bray all were back from service. A select crop of rookies helped: Stickel, Davis, Jarmoluk. It looked like the old Bear picture, and it was.

They roared through all competition, losing only to the New York Giants and the revived Chicago Cardinals; they met the Giants in the play-off game on December 15 in the Polo Grounds. Luckman was back home, and everyone remembered that 1939 game, when he ended Owen's defensive huddle, and the 1943 56-to-7 jubilee. Before the end, they were to mark down another one for Luckman. It was an old Bear trap—"Ninety-seven bingo, keep it!"—a signal devised to permit Luckman to run the ball at an appropriate moment.

The Bears never could afford to let Luckman run for fear of injury. Halas almost earned himself a husky fine one day because he ran onto the field when a couple of enemy tacklers piled onto Sid after a pass.

"Whadayou doin' out here?" the referee yelled.

"I'm looking after an investment of mine!" Halas yelled back.

Anyway, the Bears were involved in a 14-to-14 title deadlock with the Giants, fourth period, only a few minutes to go. Sid worked the ball to the Giant nineteen, then called time. He strolled to the side line.

"Now?" Luckman said to Halas.

"Now!" Halas said to Luckman.

Sid returned to the huddle, called, "Ninety-seven bingo," and lined up. As Turner handed the ball to Luckman, McAfee faked a sweep to the left. Sid hid the ball behind his right hip and kept going to the right with the whole left side

of the Bear line charging downfield to clean out the secondary.

Sid ran like a man possessed, and when he finally hit the end zone with the last Giant sprawled on the ten yard line, he ran back to the nearest blocker and hugged him.

"Yep," Johnsos said when the roars had died down, "we told Sid this time to run. We told him to run when he had the big chance, even if he got killed. That must have reminded him of something, because he gave me an awfully dirty look!"

"Yeah," Halas added, "we started Luckman off at sixty-two hundred a season, and today he's the highest-paid guy in the league. He should be. Don't let him get killed for a while yet, Luke."

Luckman's Passing Record as a Bear
(League games only)

	Attempted	Completed	Yards	Touchdown Passes
1939	68	27	636	2
1940	105	48	941	9
1941	119	68	1,181	9
1942	105	57	1,023	10
1943	202	110	2,194*	28*
1944	143	71	1,018	11
1945	217	117	1,725	14
1946 †	229	110	1,826	17
Totals	1,188	608	10,544	100

* League all-time record high.
† Shared passing title with Sammy Baugh.

All-time percentage of completions—.512.

Quarterback on five Western Division and four National Football League championship clubs in eight years.

In the eight years Luckman has been quarterback, the Bears have won sixty-two, lost twenty, tied three.

All-league quarterback: 1941, '42, '43, '44, '46.

CHAPTER 22

BEAR DOWN, CHICAGO BEARS

PAPA BEAR was throwing an informal party for newspapermen and his coaching staff, which now included Paddy Driscoll, brought back home to instruct the backfield men after years of successful coaching at St. Mel High School in Chicago and at Marquette University. Dinner had been washed down with appropriate ceremony, and the gathering had reached that posteating stage where everyone was in imminent danger of dozing off.

"What this party needs," said Halas, "is a song." Forthwith he reached into his bulging brief case and distributed copies of sheet music, the covers adorned with the legend "Bear Down, Chicago Bears." Halas beamed like a kid under a Christmas tree. "What do you think of that?" he demanded.

"Hum-m!" was the noncommittal reply, for none of the group could read a note of music.

Fortunately at that precise moment in walked Wilfrid Smith, a big name and a bigger man among sports writers. He had played pro football with the old Pine Village, Indiana, team and with the Cardinals, nor did his playing talents end there. They also included the piano.

"Let's see," mused Smitty, settling himself at the keyboard and running through the refrain. Three hours later he repaired to the bar, as did other husky-voiced scribes who fancied themselves as singers. The theme song of the Chicago Bears had been given its first public and undoubtedly most horrendous and long-winded rendition.

That was a prophetic title: "Bear Down, Chicago Bears," for bear down they did in the season of 1941 as they won a championship and lost only one game. Many maintain this

Bear team was the greatest of all time. Almost everyone agrees it would have been in '42 had not the war ripped it to shreds.

Halas tried without success to add Tommy Harmon, Michigan's three-time All-American, to that team but long before he had given up on Harmon, he had acquired two sensational backs already thoroughly steeped in Bear-style T as members of Clark Shaughnessy's championship Stanford eleven—Norm Standlee and Hugh Gallarneau.

Standlee that season came as close to being a "second Nagurski" as will be vouchsafed any man. Six feet plus and 230 pounds, he had the strength to run over opponents and the speed to run away from them. Gallarneau, an orator, boxer, gymnast, and all-round athlete, had the explosive starting speed vital to a halfback in the Halas system. Alternating with McAfee at right half, he gave National League rivals no chance to catch their breath.

Indeed, the league itself picked up new momentum and a radically different type of direction that year by appointing as its president and commissioner of professional football, Elmer Layden, grid coach and director of athletics at the University of Notre Dame. Layden succeeded Carl Storck, who had assumed the presidency following the death of Joe Carr in 1939. Layden resigned in '46 after guiding the sport safely through the hazardous war years, and Bert Bell was elected to fill his office.

The touchdown tornado that swirled out of Wrigley Field in '41 with McAfee as its apex swept up 396 points in 11 league games, and 56 touchdowns, 37 of which were made by rushing. All stand as N.F.L. records, and while they were in the process of being compiled, the New York press dubbed the Bears the "Monsters of the Midway," not at all a bad description even though Chicago's famed Midway is across the city from the den of the Bears at Wrigley Field.

Some of the games that year should be listed as "no contest," so badly did the Bears outclass most of their opponents.

Their one defeat, by those hated Packers, of course, was a personal triumph for Russ Letlow, Green Bay's all-league guard. Russ was injured before the season began, and although he didn't get into uniform for many weeks, he never was of greater value to his team. It became his job to scout the Bears and construct a defense to stop them. The efficiency with which he did his work is attested by the score of the November meeting of the teams: Green Bay, 16; Bears, 14. He stopped the Bears—once. Nobody stops them twice with the same defense, and what happened in a later meeting is quite another story.

That McAfee was going to provide the spark that set off the Bear touchdown tempest was apparent in an exhibition game at Brooklyn when he returned a punt seventy-five yards for a 14-to-9 victory with only thirty-seven seconds left to play. In the first Green Bay game he waited until the third period to strut his stuff.

The Packers were leading, 17 to 15, following a touchdown by Hinkle, when the whistle sounded for the next kickoff. Precisely fifty seconds later the Bears were ahead. McAfee caught the kickoff on his goal line and weaved and danced up the field like a Nijinsky for fifty-one yards. Osmanski tore through for twenty-three yards, Nolting sprinted for thirteen more, and then McAfee skipped around the Packer right end for a touchdown.

Four plays. Fifty seconds. A touchdown. Victory.

"You'll never see a minute of more perfect football," Joe Mihal, the guard, said that night, and the chances are he's right.

McAfee made touchdown runs of fifty-five and seventy-four yards as the Cardinals were buried under a 53-to-7 score, the most one-sided in the series that began while the Bears were still the Staleys. The Lions fell, 49 to 0, with McAfee contributing only one fifteen-yard scoring dash, yielding long-run honors to "Dagwood" McLean, who returned a punt sixty-one yards.

The Steelers were next. Art Rooney, their owner, up until the day he signed Dr. John B. "Jock" Sutherland as his coach, always considered the Bears the greatest team in football and Halas the game's outstanding tutor. He thought the Bears were great at this point and jokingly told a Pittsburgh sports writer, "I just wrote to Halas and told him we'd settle for a forfeited game and forget about our guarantee if he'd agree to a cancellation. Sending our little boys against those big Bears is just brutal. They'll run right over us!"

Rooney was worried unnecessarily, for his "little boys" did right well, holding the Bears to a 34-to-7 count and permitting McAfee to get loose on but one thirty-three-yard dash.

"Letlow's Miracle" came next, but the club rebounded to beat Cleveland, 31 to 13 (McAfee made a forty-two-yard touchdown); Washington, 35 to 21 (McAfee scored two touchdowns); and Detroit, 24 to 7 (McAfee made one touchdown on a one-yard plunge).

The Bears looked for an easy time in Philadelphia, but with penalties, bad breaks, general lethargy, and the Eagles' alertness they found themselves on the zero end of a 14-to-0 score at half time. Green Bay also had a half-time deficit in Washington, so this appeared to be the Bears' opportunity to take a firm hold on the western title. Halas, the old psychologist who once at Green Bay had his boys sing "God Bless America" in mid-field as the band struck up the tune, to break the players' tension, now spoke to them scornfully, one of the few times he had employed such an approach.

"I can get players for a hundred bucks to play like you did in the first half," he said, his words dripping icicles. "Go out there now and do at least what you're being paid to do, and you'll beat 'em easy. Better yet, play like the Chicago Bears."

The Bears' response to the Halas treatment is best illustrated by the score: Bears, 49; Eagles, 14. Six times the fleet Bear backs broke away on runs of forty-five yards or more;

twice, long runs were called back, and three touchdowns were recalled by penalties. The Bears simply ran off with the ball game, with Gallarneau piling up three touchdowns until one Eagle said truthfully, "I knew they were big and tough, but I had no idea they were so fast. Why, they ran right away from us."

They didn't run away from the Cardinals the following Sunday, although they had every incentive to do so. They had to win to tie the Packers for the western championship with identical records of ten wins and one defeat, and that's why the Packers, seated in a group in the upper deck of the Comiskey Park stands, were laughing heartily when a combination of Ray Mallouf's passing and Goldberg's running gave the Cards a 14-to-0 lead after two minutes of the second quarter. The big boys from the north began making a mental calculation of the extra money they'd get out of the championship play-off with the Giants.

It was just about at this moment that the thrill went out of the game for those in the press box, for word had been flashed over the telegraph wires of the Jap attack on Pearl Harbor. The players knew nothing of it, however, nor did more than a handful of fans realize that they were watching a great team for perhaps the last time and seeing a football dynasty die almost a-borning.

As they had against the Eagles seven days before, the Bears rallied for two quick touchdowns, but Bill Daddio kicked a field goal to drop them behind again, 17 to 14, at the half.

At the start of the third period Gallarneau raced eighteen yards to put the Bears ahead once more, but Mallouf passed to Bert Johnson on the third play of the final quarter to bounce the inspired Cardinals back into the lead. Then the Bears got a big break in luck, and presto, it was all over. The break came on a penalty called against the Cards for pass interference just a yard over the mid-field stripe in Cardinal territory.

Out of the huddle came the Bears, and back stepped Luck-

man, his arm raised. Straight into McAfee's arms he threw, and high-stepping George ate up the seventeen yards separating him from the goal line with a lightning, zigzag run. For good measure, a few moments later, he ran seventy yards to put the victory firmly in the bag, 34 to 24, and the Bears into a divisional play-off with the Packers.

The day of the west's first sectional play-off was colder than a well-digger's nose, but 43,425 people filled Wrigley Field's icy pews. They got a worse chill as Gallarneau fumbled the opening kickoff and the Packers recovered and scored after one minute and fifty-six seconds of play. They were heated up soon enough as Gallarneau, atoning for his jittery error with a courageous comeback, fielded the next Green Bay punt on the dead run and dodged eighty-one yards to a touchdown. That dash started the Bear adding machine, and at the half they led, 30 to 7, from where they coasted to a 33-to-14 decision while saving themselves for the title game itself.

Next to Gallarneau on the Bear roster of heroes was George "Quack-Quack" Wilson, the right end, who acquired his odd nickname by being the great decoy on forward passes. Wilson was forever running down the field on pass plays, luring defenders away from the receiver to whom Luckman planned to throw. Only four times during the season had Luckman passed to "Quack-Quack," and on all four occasions he caught the ball. In the play-off he not only caught another to make his record 100 per cent for the year but intercepted two passes as well.

The championship game with the Giants on December 22 was an anticlimax, both artistically and financially. The Bears won, 37 to 9, after holding a slim 9-to-6 lead at the half, and a crowd of 13,500—a throwback to the pioneer days—was on hand to see them do it. Several items contributed to the smallness of the turnout. Cold weather, war hysteria, and the proximity of Christmas all played a part, but actually the fans lost interest after the Green Bay game.

That, in their minds, was the championship game; the Giants were merely an added and not too troublesome obstacle to be removed.

All nine points scored by the new champions in the first half, incidentally, were field goals kicked by Bob Snyder, who thus equaled a record set by his predecessor, Manders, in 1933. They stretched to seven the number he had kicked successfully in key games. As an oddity, late in the game, Ray McLean added a point after touchdown by the almost obsolete method of drop kicking.

As a farewell gesture the Bears defeated an All-Star team, 35 to 24, to raise $27,777 for Navy Relief. And as a parting tribute Tuffy Leemans voiced an opponent's opinion that is perhaps the most accurate analysis of the Bears:

"The Bear team is the greatest I've ever seen or played against. Everyone in our dressing room said the same thing. They're better than the 1933–34 Bears, the '33 Giants, or any other team that was ever assembled. They're tops!"

The 1942 season provided ample evidence the Bears were still tops even though selective service and enlistments had stripped the team of much of its superb manpower. Gone from the attack were Standlee and McAfee, yet it continued to turn out points on a production-line schedule. In compiling 11 consecutive league victories, the Bears fell only 20 points short of the previous campaign's record total of 396 and tallied only three fewer touchdowns, 53. The extra point was added after 46 of those touchdowns for a record.

It was not a season of thrilling encounters, as is attested by the scores by which the Bears beat Green Bay, 44 to 28; Cleveland, 21 to 7; Cardinals, 41 to 14; New York, 26 to 7; Philadelphia, 45 to 14; Detroit, 16 to 0; Brooklyn, 35 to 0; Green Bay, 38 to 7; Detroit, 42 to 0; Cleveland, 47 to 0; Cardinals, 21 to 7. The Cards were smothered so completely their rushing total was a minus seventeen yards.

Much of the credit for this lack of deceleration on offense was due to three fine young backs, all enlisted and awaiting

call to service. They were Frank "Monk" Maznicki of Boston College, Bill Geyer of Colgate, and Charley O'Rourke, the forward-passing master from Boston College. Chuck Drulis, a stubby, rough, defensive guard, bolstered the line.

Then, too, there were the "Clicks," a group of backs and ends who would threaten to expel anyone from membership if he didn't score a point or contribute something tangible to a scoring drive in each game. They were in the touchdown business, this happy-go-lucky bunch, which included George Wilson as "president," Ray McLean, Hamp Pool, Harry Clark, Bobby Swisher, and the two rookies, Geyer and O'Rourke.

Famiglietti, as he had done in the past, again stepped into the breach with some explosive plunges from fullback. In the first Packer game "Fam" barreled to three touchdowns, thus tripling his 1941 season's production and coming within one of his '40 record.

In midseason Halas himself stepped out of the picture when called back to active duty with the Navy as a lieutenant commander. His farewell game at the helm was against the Eagles, and his boys presented him with a 45-to-14 going-away present. Then he turned the management of the club over to a triumvirate composed of Johnsos, Anderson, and Driscoll. Anderson and Johnsos were designated as co-coaches with Driscoll assisting and assuming many of Halas' former duties. Ralph Brizzolara, secretary and business manager, was entrusted with the twin headaches of running the club's business affairs and trying to find football players not likely to be called to military service before they learned the signals.

Although separated from his team physically, Halas still was with them in spirit, and the first act of Johnsos and Anderson after every game was to try to reach Papa Bear by long-distance phone to relate in minute detail what had happened. The reports phoned to the Naval Air Station, Nor-

man, Oklahoma, were uniformly pleasing, adding up to the Bears' second undefeated season in history.

Actually the Bears' winning streak numbered twenty-four games, starting when they beat Cleveland on November 9, 1941, continuing through four more games in the '41 season, two play-off games, six exhibitions, and eleven league games in '42. Through that string they scored 799 points to 245 for their opponents.

Lieutenant Commander Halas was granted leave to watch the Bears play the Redskins in Washington for the championship, but he would have been happier had he remained at Norman, for the team suffered the same fate that befell its undefeated predecessor in '34—it "blew" the championship.

So completely had the Bears smothered all opposition during the season that they were installed prohibitive favorites at five to one. But this run of uninterrupted success had produced another effect—it had made the Bears a little too cocky, a bit too confident. Coupled with that attitude was the handicap of snow and ice in Chicago the week of the game, cutting practice to the minimum. The Bears weren't ready for a tough ball game, but they were primed for an upset. They got both.

Bear complacency was increased early in the game when Lee Artoe scooped up a fumble and ran fifty yards to a touchdown. The score came so easily and quickly that his subsequent miss of the extra point was shrugged off as of no consequence. The Bears, so they thought, would score plenty more.

Instead it was Washington that scored, Sammy Baugh passing to Wilbur Moore for thirty-nine yards and a touchdown. Bob Masterson converted from placement, and the Redskins were ahead, 7 to 6. This so heartened the 'Skins that they came surging back again on a sustained drive that gained forty-three yards against a Bear line that had yielded only six hundred yards in its eleven games of the regular season.

The turning point came when the Redskins had the ball, fourth down and a yard to go, just outside the Bear twenty. Andy Farkas, halted by a tremendous mass of struggling players, leaped high on top of the pile, which teetered hesitantly, then rolled slowly over and dropped him on the twenty yard line with the needed yardage.

The rest of that march was all Farkas. Into the line he zoomed for five yards, eight, five, and then one. On the next play he fumbled, but not until after he had crossed the goal line. He had a touchdown, and the Redskins had a championship as two desperate Bear drives were halted eleven and two yards short of pay dirt. Final score: Washington, 14; Chicago Bears, 6.

And thus in the dust of defeat ended the greatest era of Bear dominance over the football world. Within a few months fourteen members of that team were in service. The big bad Bears had gone to war.

CHAPTER 23

THE WAR YEARS

LIKE most professional teams, the Bears fought two wars during the rugged years of 1943–45.

They sent forty-eight men into the uniforms of Uncle Sam, then dug up all the graybeards and sundry personnel they could muster to keep the Bear uniform on the warpath at home.

The forty-eight men included the boss himself, Halas, and only one who didn't come back—Lieutenant Young Bussey, U.S.N.R., the kid from Louisiana who died on Lingayen Gulf in the first landing party to hit that Philippine stronghold.

The war at home was as tough in a sense as the battle on foreign soil. It started with the Bears' sixth world championship in 1943 and ended in a daze of humiliation in 1945, the worst season in Bear history.

It was as Hugh Gallarneau said as he painfully yanked off his shoulder pads with the 1945 season's finale written into the books.

"I feel just like I felt last August fourteenth. I'm sure glad it's over!"

It was "last August fourteenth" that Marine Lieutenant Gallarneau heard the news on bloody Okinawa that the Japanese had quit and that World War II was over.

There were only hazy signs in early 1943 that doom was impending in 1945. The coaching triumvirate of Johnsos, Anderson, and Driscoll had inherited a fair-to-middlin' Bear club from the boss.

There were Johnny Siegal and George Wilson at the ends for the traditional opener at Green Bay on September 26.

There were Nagurski, Fortmann, Turner, Merkle, and Hoptowit rounding out the line.

The starting backfield that afternoon was reminiscent of at least a few great days of the past with Luckman at quarterback, Clark and Geyer at halfback, and Famiglietti at fullback. But the tip-off was the name Nagurski. The Bronk, thirty-five years old, had answered the call of Boss Halas after retiring six years before.

"That was my big weakness," Bronko grinned. "Me the big Nagurski, with a little weakness like that Halas. I couldn't resist the guy."

There was nothing to brag about that day, however. The Bears fumbled just enough to give the hated Packers a 21-to-21 tie, the first deadlock between the two western rivals since 1928. It was the elusive Hutson, almost as old as Nagurski, who provided the touchdown and the extra point that gave Green Bay half the day's honors, but not before the Bears issued a sample of what the rest of the National Football League could expect.

But the "bad" start was merely fuel to the Bears. It wasn't long before the Johnsos-Anderson-Driscoll combine had big Jim Benton and Dante Magnani molded into the Bear system. Both were on lend-lease from the Cleveland Rams that year, what with the Rams disbanding for one season.

Magnani was elated. "What a pleasure," he said, "what a relief! Running with these guys instead of against 'em."

Benton was put into the hands of Johnsos and Anderson. It wasn't long before he became almost as dangerous as Hutson, and for the following three years Benton was to haunt the Bears with their own creation.

With the Packers out of the way, the Bears began to chop up their competition in little pieces. The cross-town rival Cardinals fell, 20 to 0, to Luckman's passes. So did Detroit, 35 to 24, the Philadelphia-Pittsburgh one-year combine, 48 to 21, and Pete Cawthon's Brooklyn Dodgers, 33 to 21.

In return games the Bears rolled over Detroit again.

Anderson's tackles were coming through—Musso, Hoptowit, Nagurski; the lone rookie, Bill Steinkemper; and the Cardinal castoff, Al Babartsky.

Then the pinch began to be felt. The Navy called up Bill Osmanski, Geyer, Siegal, Steinkemper. The annual Green Bay classic at Wrigley Field was next, and suddenly acting boss Ralph Brizzolara announced the signing of another old Bear great, Ray Nolting.

That psychological surge, a Bear trick that has been just as much a part of a winning tradition as the McAfees, the Nagurskis, and the Luckmans, was enough to swamp the Packers, 21 to 7 before 43,425 excited fans.

But it was becoming obvious that the pitching and quarterbacking of Luckman was the key to this march to the title. It was a strange picture in the weekly statistics. The Bears, always great on the ground, were leading the league in passing. The Packers, perennial aerial champions, were on top of the heap in rushing.

This was leading, slowly but surely, to the annual Bear invasion of the Polo Grounds in New York. Steve Owen's Giants were not exactly enjoying a hot season. They had won only two of five starts, but Steve always had been fairly confident of beating the Bears since that famous "sneaker" of 1934.

He made the mistake, however, of indiscreetly telling an eastern writer that "the Bears couldn't really run off the T any more."

How Johnsos, Anderson, and Driscoll burned that statement into the very hearts of their Bears! By the time the squad left for the east on Friday, November 12, the Giants were doomed.

A few days before, however, one Giant (with experience) had forecast the blackest Sunday in Giant history. He was Tuffy Leemans, hard-running New York back. Tuffy was approached by a pair of New York photographers at the appropriately named Bear Mountain training camp to pose

in a cage with a couple of real live bears. It was a fine idea, but Tuffy's answer was better.

"Hell," Leemans grinned, "that's a cinch. I've played against Bulldog Turner, and where d'ya think there's any kinda bear tougher than him?"

There were a thousand people in the Polo Grounds on November 14 for every point the Bears piled up on Steve Owen. Exactly 56,691 heartbroken Manhattanites saw Luckman shatter all records in a 56-to-7 rout by passing for seven touchdowns and 433 yards. Records fell in wholesale lots.

Luckman had just enlisted in the Merchant Marine as an ensign. His birthday was the following week, and this was his first and only appearance before the home-town folks. What with the war's end far away, many wondered whether this might be Luckman's last game in the big town.

When he already had passed the Giants dizzy with five touchdown strikes, Anderson yanked him. After all, there was the Redskin game the next week to consider. But high up in the press box a dramatic little scene was under way. Sid Feder, Associated Press writer, was leaning over to Johnsos, the Bears' grandstand quarterback.

"Luckman needs only one more touchdown to tie the league record and two to beat it," Feder told Johnsos. "It would make a swell story if Sid did it."

Johnsos hurriedly relayed the information to Paddy Driscoll via the press box-to-bench telephone. Another hurried huddle followed as Driscoll turned the tip over to Anderson, who in turn advised Luckman.

"Want to go in and try for that record, Sid?" Anderson grinned.

There was no answer. Luckman simply picked up his helmet and made his way into the Bear huddle.

Johnsos took one look at the Giant defense, picked up his phone, and spoke rapidly. A moment later he leaned over, tapped Feder on the arm, and said, "O.K., Sid, here comes number six."

Luckman promptly passed three yards to George Wilson for the score. Three minutes before the final gun, with the Bears leading, 49 to 7, Johnsos again whispered into his telephone, leaned over, tapped Feder on the arm, and held up seven fingers. And there it was again. Luckman passed to Hampton Pool, who was three yards out, and the big Bear dragged three Giants with him into the end zone.

It was a bad day all around except for the Bears. Two Philadelphia scouts were furious. They threw their Giant scouting notes away in disgust. "A waste of time," one said, "the Giants hardly had their hands on the ball!"

Anderson and Johnsos chuckled in their beer again when the Bears started their homeward trip.

"You know," Anderson said, "the Bears had been hearing so much about how strong Notre Dame was and how Notre Dame could give the Bears a lesson in their own back yard. Well, it sort of hurt the boys, so they decided to show off their own T. Wounded pride, that's all, wounded pride."

There had never been a day like it in the National Football League. Luckman completed twenty-three out of thirty passes, getting seven of the eight touchdowns, with only Harry Clark's four-yard rush spoiling an otherwise perfect aerial record.

The Bears gained 702 yards in all, which broke their own record of 613 set against the Cardinals in 1941; the total of 508 yards by air smashed a Green Bay mark set in 1942 against the Cardinals, and Bob Snyder converted on all eight touchdowns for another new record.

A breakdown of Luckman's passes showed two to Benton for four and fifteen yards, fifty-five yards to Connie Mack Berry, twenty-seven and forty to Pool, thirty-three to Clark, and three to Wilson.

"Well, anyway," said Tim Mara, the Giants' owner, "they didn't score seventy-three on us!"

This was the ball club that everyone thought was wrecked. Gone were George McAfee, Hugh Gallarneau, Norm Stand-

lee, Frank Maznicki, Charley O'Rourke, Stydahar, Artoe, Kolman—enough to make a first-class football team in any league in the world.

If there was any celebrating over this seventh straight victory against a single tie it was forgotten by the following Sunday. The Bears had a date with George Preston Marshall, who always had claimed that if he didn't have the best team in football in his Washington Redskins, he had the best band.

There were no illusions, however, in the Bears' Wrigley Field training quarters that week. "Dutch" Bergman, who had scouted for Coach Ray Flaherty in Washington's 1942 title win over the Bears, was now coach of the Redskins. Bergman had even boasted that it was his defensive plans which gave Washington the 1942 championship. Such talk is usually fatal.

"Don't commit your defense against the Bears," he had said. "Permit short gains and close in hard and fast once the Bears commit their offensive movement."

It had worked, too, but this was another year. The Bears had this new psychological weapon to add to their potential strength. For the first time in years, however, it was doomed to failure.

There wasn't a healthy fullback in the Bear household. Famiglietti had a charley horse; Doug McEnulty, a bum ankle, and Bob Masters, a green replacement, hardly knew the plays.

Two months before, the Bears had barely nicked the Redskins, 21 to 14, in an exhibition at Baltimore, and since then Bergman had had eight games to plot against Johnsos and Anderson. To top it off, a few hours before the kickoff, Luckman and Benton were trying to shake off attacks of grippe. Not even the fire and brimstone of Hunk Anderson could pull this one out, so Sammy Baugh and Company rolled over their old rivals, 21 to 7.

"The Bears, I regret to say," said Anderson, when he re-

turned to Chicago, "were outcharged, outmaneuvered, and outthunk. We had one advantage. We outstunk 'em!"

There is no such word as alibi in the Bear vocabulary. Both Anderson and Johnsos had all the license in the world to point to their crippled stars and say, with authority, that the Bears lost because they didn't have the manpower. Instead, Anderson pointed to the annual home finale against the Cardinals.

"Anyway," Hunk shuddered, "our tackles are still breathing. We've got a few of our backs patched up so now they don't need crutches. If we don't win the football championship, we'll sure win some kind of title over at the Illinois Masonic Hospital."

The Bears had to win their last game. Another defeat would give the Packers a tie for the Western Division crown and force a play-off. It was traditional that the Cardinals, now coached by a youthful alumnus, Phil Handler, give the Bears all they could handle in this annual windup. Sunday, November 28, was to be no exception.

There still wasn't a healthy fullback in the house, and that meant only one thing—Nagurski. They were going to roll old number three onto the tracks again. Bronk was the best old breach filler in the business during his long football career, so when Johnsos and Anderson approached the thirty-five-year-old giant they didn't try to soft-soap him.

"Now, you've earned your pay over and over at tackle for nine games, Bronk," said Anderson. "You don't have to do this, but would you like to play a little fullback again Sunday?"

It was like asking Halas whether he'd like another Nagurski around today. The Bronk actually leaped at the chance.

There was no evading the evidence that the Bears were going to need Nagurski and every other weapon they could muster. Luckman was shaky from the grippe, Benton now had a pulled leg muscle along with his cold, and the "old men" were getting awfully tired.

The game started on a seesaw note, the Cardinals taking a 7-to-0 lead, the Bears tying; the Cardinals going ahead on a field goal, the Bears leading at half time, 14 to 10, on a thirty-five-yard pass from Luckman to Pool.

Bob Morrow and Johnny Grigas made it 24 to 14, Cardinals, in the third period, and by the time the fourth quarter began and with darkness slowly shrouding Comiskey Park, the Bear family was getting nervous. It was time for Nagurski. Before the fourth period was two minutes old, Bronk had scored a touchdown on tremendous, body-breaking smashes into the vaunted Cardinal line. Snyder's kick made it 21 to 24.

Nine minutes later, Hunk looked at Bronk again. The Bears needed a first down badly. It was fourth and four to go on the Cardinal thirty-three. Big Nag, without saying a word, pigeon-toed into the game. Everybody knew he would carry the ball and right over left tackle, too. He did for the four yards and two more for good measure.

Luckman promptly threw Nagurski at the Cards again for two yards then, with the goal posts hardly visible in the dusk, passed the final twenty-five yards to Clark in the end zone.

It was anticlimactic, but good insurance, when Luckman picked Wilson out in the end zone for another touchdown four minutes later to wind up the game, 35 to 24, and give the Bears the Western Division crown.

Next stop was Washington or New York for the world championship, and in addition to all the records Luckman and the Bears had set for 1943 they were to set another: the longest season in N.F.L. history.

When the regular schedule had ended, Washington and New York were tied for the eastern title with identical records of six, three, and one. On December 12, the Giants had routed the Redskins, 31 to 7, to throw the race into a stand-off. Washington, however, bounced back a week later to win the play-off, 28 to 0, and the dubious honor of playing the Bears on the day after Christmas.

So when Sammy Baugh and his Redskins ambled into Lafayette, Indiana, two days before the Wrigley Field finale for workouts, they were a confident lot. Baugh, who had beaten the Bears almost singlehanded in several previous starts, must be given personal credit for putting the Redskins in bad with the Bears on December 26, 1943.

"The Bears?" the lean Texan frowned when asked how he thought he'd do on the following Sunday. "I'm more worried about this damn cold weather!"

Other Redskins followed the line of attack: "The Bears have laid off too long to be any good at this late date." This was a distinct possibility, for they had finished their regular season exactly a month before and fidgeted around Wrigley Field for four weeks waiting for Washington and New York to settle the eastern picture.

"We're too quick for those old guys," and, "We did it once and we can do it again," were other sample gems of wisdom from the unknowing Washingtons.

One Redskin even said, "All those Bears have got is brains."

Putting them all together, the Bear board of strategy had the Monsters in a murderous mood by Sunday. As if someone had decreed it, a warm sun poured on Chicago that day after Christmas. The ticket sale was 34,320, but only 33,632 actual spectators showed up. They paid an all-time high gate of $120,500.85 and the players consequently took home the largest players' pool to that date, $68,679.50.

It was not a story of the final score: Bears, 41; Washington, 21. It was a story of a team literally creeping with age and infirmity knocking a young spirited favorite silly with perfect team co-ordination and strategy.

Luckman, on leave from the Merchant Marine for the game, smashed more records by passing for five touchdowns, two to Clark, two to Magnani, and one to Benton. Other championship play-off records to fall included Snyder's five extra points in one game, Clark's fourth touchdown in all

play-off games, the Bears' total of seven play-off dates, and a tie for fewest fumbles.

Somebody said after it was over, after Nagurski continued his forays at fullback with one tremendous touchdown plunge, that Bronk had no business being in there with those kids at his age.

The Bronk, who had run eleven times for thirty-four yards, laughed, "What in hell do I know about business!"

The "old men" calmly picked up their $1,100 full-share checks and looked back on one of the most amazing years in Bear history. And they counted other spoils. Four made the all-league team—Fortmann, Turner, Clark, and Luckman. The club led the league in total offense, passing, total defense, and passing defense; finished second in rushing and percentage of passes completed.

Not one Bear won an individual title, but Luckman set two records that will probably stand for years: he passed for 28 touchdowns and 2,194 yards to break the old standards set by Green Bay's great Cecil Isbell.

Over the season the Bears won fourteen, tied one, and lost only to Washington. You could sum up 1943, the first of the "critical" war years, by listening in on a dressing-room scene soon after the Bears had sent Sammy Baugh and Company back to Washington and the four winds.

"They said we didn't have the brawn to win in 1943," one Bear yelled. "Well, we didn't need the brawn. We outbrained them!"

If you can imagine a Bear boasting they were outbrawned, you have 1943, Chicago Bear style.

Things were tough all over in 1944, and it started getting that way for the Bears on January 4. As if it was an omen, acting boss Brizzolara answered a sports writer's telephone call that afternoon to learn he had just been fined $500, along with Washington's Mr. Marshall. It was the climax of one of the weirdest incidents in the Bear family album.

The scene was the Bear bench during the December 26

title play-off with the Redskins, the time a few minutes before the half. It was still a close game, 7 to 7, with no indication of the rout to follow.

There on the end of the Bear bench sat a big fellow with Homburg hat and coonskin coat—none other than George Preston Marshall!

Brizzolara spotted him first and made a mad dash for the Washington tycoon. His voice could be heard far over the roar as Luckman ran twenty-four yards from pass formation.

Nagurski made three, and Brizzolara now was gesticulating wildly as Marshall wagged his head to and fro. Luckman ran fifteen yards more off the T, and the Bears were on Washington's three yard line as Brizzolara yelled to equipment manager Jack Goldie to "kindly escort this man off the premises!"

Goldie rushed to the bench, grabbed Marshall's arm, and started dragging him into the stands as Nagurski plowed over right tackle for a touchdown.

As Snyder booted the extra point to put the Bears ahead for good, the clock showed two minutes to go, and Marshall was having great difficulty, this time with an usher, who ordered him out of the stands because he didn't have a seat stub!

The words, the confusion, and the pursuant publicity gave Commissioner Elmer Layden the evidence to fine both Brizzolara and Marshall for "actions not reciprocal of the public confidence in the National Football League."

Brizzolara's temper flared again. "After all," he explained, "I didn't want Marshall there eavesdropping on our coaches' plans. A championship and a great honor were at stake."

"Fiddlesticks!" Marshall blustered in answer. "I merely went over to pay a friendly visit to the Bear coaches. I misjudged the time, that's all. I thought the half was about over. Besides, I think it was very ungentlemanly of Brizzolara to kick me—a guest—out!"

With that off their chests, the Bears started to count casu-

alties from 1943 as they prepared to defend their championship. The list was long, for nineteen of the twenty-eight men who had finished the '43 campaign were missing.

Tongues began to wag when the Bears announced one day they had signed Carl Brumbaugh as assistant coach. With Luckman firmly attached to the Merchant Marine, it was hard to deny that Brummy probably would wind up as number one quarterback at the ripe old age of thirty-seven.

By mid-June it was learned that Gene Ronzani, another graybeard, had signed on again and that Luckman at least would be available for the clash with the College All-Stars in August.

By this time the Bears also had shifted their training site from Delafield, Wisconsin, to St. Joseph's College, near Rensselaer, Indiana, and there were rumors that Nagurski would be back for this one last giant fling.

But it was a sad and Nagurski-less lot which reported to Johnsos, Anderson, and Driscoll at Collegeville early in August. A few of the old-timers were there—Famiglietti, McLean, Nolting, Ronzani, Wilson, Berry, Musso, Turner. Luckman eventually arrived, not in too good condition but willing, although he had only six days of practice while on leave. In spite of everything, the Bears went into the All-Star clash as slight favorites.

By virtue of a well-aimed field goal by an unheralded guard, Pete Gudauskas (whom Brizzolara had picked up for a forty-two-cent telegram after the former Murray, Kentucky, State Teachers College lineman had been cut loose by Green Bay), the Bears managed to win in the mud and rain, 24 to 21. They also managed to uncover a future Bear star, guard Ed Sprinkle, former Hardin-Simmons ace and a protégé of an old teammate, Bulldog Turner. Turner had fetched Sprinkle into the Bear camp all the way from Texas, "just on a hunch," as he explained.

"Thought you might like to get a look at Ed here,"

Turner drawled to Johnsos. "He breathes, anyway, and that'll help."

Johnsos took one look at the big blond ex-Annapolis youngster and signed him. Seeing was believing for the Bears by then, and no holds barred. Sprinkle made Turner a prophet in his own land and gave the Bears a tremendous lift in the line for the next three years.

But by the time the Bears went back to Collegeville, without Luckman, limping slightly in all directions, averaging nearly thirty years in age, with a couple of ex-coaches around as reserves and even a 155-pound quarterback substitute—well, 1944 was nothing to look forward to expectantly.

They started by losing a 21-to-7 exhibition to Washington, and one eastern writer had the gall to explain: "The Redskins showed the Bears how the T should be played." It was like rubbing salt into a wound.

By the time the Bears arrived in Green Bay for the league opener they had nothing but a desire to win. They had several new rookie hopes in Henry "Bob" Margarita, Al Grygo, Jim Fordham, Rudy Smeja, George Zorich, and Tipp Mooney, but Nolting had broken a leg in an exhibition, and he was scratched for good.

Luckman was around occasionally, literally on orders from his Merchant Marine commandant, and for the first time in memory the Bears opened a season as underdogs. Green Bay had been waiting three years for this September 24.

Midway in the second quarter it was Green Bay, 28; Bears, 28, on three touchdown passes from Luckman and a five-yard buck by Margarita. But the Bears had fired their last bullet. Green Bay went on to win, 42 to 28, the most points the Packers ever had scored on the Bears in a single game. It was the second chapter of an ill-omened year.

In spite of everything, they bounced back the following week to earn revenge over Washington in another exhibition, 28 to 0, but it was a futile gesture. Cleveland, back in the league again, whipped the Bears, 19 to 7. A slight

breather, against the combined Cardinal-Pittsburgh team, gave them their first win, and they tied with Detroit.

The Rams then discovered the Bears still had a bit of stuff, and lost 28 to 21, which brought Green Bay to Wrigley Field once again, along with George "the Brute" Trafton, now Packer line coach.

For a change, Johnsos and Anderson were glad to be underdogs, and they were emphatically. The 45,553 fans who packed the Cubs' Park that afternoon, however, saw the unbelievable. The Bears, whipped, 42 to 28, in the first date, snapped Green Bay's six game winning streak, 21 to 0, with Luckman passing for two touchdowns and scoring the third himself. It was the first time Green Bay had been held scoreless in sixty-six league games, and ended Don Hutson's string of consecutive scoring games at forty-one.

Things actually got rosy when the Bears swamped the new Boston Yanks, 21 to 7, but Detroit spoiled the dream with a 41 to 21 rout and even one-sided victories over Philadelphia (34 to 7) and the Card-Pitt combine (49 to 7) didn't save the champs. They wound up with a six, three, and one record.

Green Bay went on to win the western title and the world's championship. The Bears had to be content to place Luckman and Turner on the all-league eleven.

As for 1945, the Bears would rather forget it. History, however, won't. The record books show how disastrous the last war year was. Wins, three; losses, seven—the worst in Bear history. They could score only 192 points, sixth in an eleven team league, and opponents collected 235. Only two teams had worse records in '45: Pittsburgh with two, eight, and none and the Cardinals with one, nine, and none.

Washington again started the Bears downhill in a non-championship game, 14 to 7, and the skids were really greased from that point on. Green Bay swamped them, 31 to 21; Cleveland became the first team ever to beat the Bears

twice in the same season; even Detroit turned the humiliating trick, 16 to 10 and 35 to 28.

Then Green Bay returned to Wrigley Field to lose 28 to 24. It was George Halas who won it, although he was far out in the Pacific ocean.

Ten minutes before kickoff time came a cablegram from the boss, telling the boys not to blame Johnsos or Anderson or Luckman for the horrors of defeat, but to blame Halas.

"Now," the cablegram ended, "go out and kick hell out of the Packers!"

It is significant that the Bears also beat the Cardinals in the return game and added Pittsburgh as the only other victim of the year. The significant element was the reappearance of McAfee, Gallarneau, Luckman, Stydahar, Turner, and Kavanaugh for the final three weeks of the campaign.

It was as Luke Johnsos said as the Bears put the Cardinals in their place in the welcome finale on December 2, 1945:

"It's going to be a long winter. Every time I open my eyes I'm going to see somebody running by for a touchdown. Then I see 1946 and no place to go but up, and at least we've got someone who can chase those guys—McAfee."

CHAPTER 24

THE SKIPPER TAKES THE HELM

NEAR the end of the 1945 season rumors began to fly in the National Football League's more lofty circles to the effect that Commander George Halas would return shortly from the Pacific to be placed on inactive duty by the Navy and to resume his rightful place as coach of the Bears. The story brought a laugh to the lips of George Marshall.

"One thing about Halas," he declared, "he'll never get a discharge to coach the Bears until he knows there are enough good players discharged so he'll have a football team to coach."

In a sense the miraculous Mr. Marshall was right, for when Halas returned to the role of Papa Bear in 1946, he found a squad plentifully endowed with football talent. He also found the National League engaged in a bitter battle of dollars to keep the nation's top collegiate and service stars from joining the newly organized All America Football Conference. Back from one fight, he was plunged at once into another.

George put his uniforms away in moth balls, laid aside his decorations and campaign ribbons, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work. At the year's end he had managed not only to win another championship, but to sign one of the country's most famous stars—Bob Fenimore—for his '47 Bears, and to expand his sporting-goods and jewelry business.

But before he could get his teeth into the fight with the All America he had suffered a minor football Pearl Harbor, losing several of his former favorites to the new league. Lured away were Norm Standlee, Charley O'Rourke, Lee Artoe, Bob Nowaskey (whom the boys called "Nohairskey"

for reasons obvious when he removed his headgear), and Jim Daniell. But in their places came Fred Davis by trade and a host of newcomers such as Walt Stickel of Pennsylvania, Mike Jarmoluk of Temple, Pat Preston of Wake Forest, and Joe Osmanski, Bullet Bill's kid brother from Holy Cross. Back, too, were most of the big bad Bears who had gone into service at the end of the '41 and '42 seasons, including "One-Play" McAfee.

It was unfortunate, but that nickname was strangely prophetic for the '46 campaign. George didn't get into many plays prior to the championship game itself. On the opening kickoff of a nonchampionship game against Washington, McAfee was sprinting up the field with his usual acrobatic antics when his knee came into violent contact with the headgear of a tackler. What appeared like a minor bruise at the time, for George remained in the game, proved to be a serious injury that stubbornly refused to respond to treatment.

Mention of McAfee takes us back to training camp in the late summer of '42 after he had entered the Navy. A rookie halfback was handed his white jersey with the big 5 on the back. As the youngster trotted out on the field, Danny Fortmann said with a note of solemn warning in his voice: "Wear that number well, son. It belongs to the greatest ball carrier who ever lived!"

No team can lose a McAfee and be the same, especially when it is short a power fullback, too. With Standlee gone, the heavy-duty fullback work was to have fallen on Joe Osmanski, but he was injured in the first league game and slow to mend. In the end it was brother Bill who did the yeoman work, but he wasn't his old dynamic self until late in the race.

Few athletes ever competed under less favorable conditions than did Dr. William Osmanski in the fall of '46. Back from service as a Navy dentist attached to the Marines on Okinawa, Bill opened practice on Chicago's north side, a mile or two removed from Wrigley Field. His home was

as far on the south side of town as was his office on the north side. He had no auto and could buy none. Each morning he had to rise at six o'clock, grab a bite of breakfast, and ride an elevated train across town to be at the ball park in uniform at nine. After a morning of practice he'd report to his dental office shortly after noon and remain there until mid-evening, when perhaps he'd be called on to attend a Bear club meeting and movie showing. Then a street car or el train across town once more. Save for such occasions when he was lucky enough to find a seat on the el he was on his feet all day.

"No wonder I didn't have any drive," he says. "My legs were so tired I could hardly move."

Only in two or three flashes in '46 did Bill Osmanski recover his brilliance of earlier years, yet it is typical of his fighting spirit that his greatest game of the season should be the championship game itself.

With a shortage of fullback power and McAfee lost for most of the season, Halas was faced with one of his greatest coaching tasks, but he solved it with the help of a typical Anderson-coached line that drew its largest bite from the Bulldog at center. Thanks to the line and Luckman and some iron-man duty by Hugh Gallarneau, the Bears were a reasonable facsimile of the great Bears of five years earlier.

Indeed, after they smacked down the Packers in the opener at Green Bay by 30 to 7, Phil Handler of the Cardinals, in the stands as a scout, insisted, "The Bears are as good as they were in 1941." They weren't, of course, but they had a lot of people kidded into thinking so for a while —and maybe they themselves were included in that category.

Certainly against the youthful, fiery, and promising Cards they looked none too good for three quarters, trailing going into the final period, 17 to 14, largely because of an eighty-two-yard pass from Paul Christman to Billy Dewell. But then the score reverted to the pattern of the years, and the Bears won, 34 to 17. Buddy Parker, assistant coach of the Cardi-

nals, had the explanation. "You can't afford to make mistakes against the Bears," he said. "We made three. The result? Three Bear touchdowns!"

The two games with Los Angeles, defending champions, exploded the Bear superman myth, although the Halasmen didn't lose either. The teams played to a 28-to-28 tie in Chicago before 44,211, and the Bears won a return match on the coast, 27 to 21, before 68,831. In between the two games they beat the Eagles, 21 to 14, and the Packers, 10 to 7, and lost to the Giants, 14 to 0, as that old imitator, Red Smith, the ex-Packer, concocted a defense to stop them.

The first game with the Rams introduced the Bears to Tom Harmon, Michigan's old "98," who might have been a member of their greatest teams if he had succumbed earlier to the siren lure of the professional dollar. Despite years away from the gridiron Harmon showed he still knew how to run, taking a twenty-five-yard pass from Bob Waterfield for one touchdown and scoring another on an eighty-four-yard run. Harmon went nowhere in the return game, Luckman passing three touchdowns to Ken Kavanaugh and Gallarneau running fifty-two yards for another.

The Washington game produced a 24-to-20 victory and a new Bear hero—a six-foot four-inch rookie end from Iowa by the name of Jim Keane. With less than four minutes to go the Bears were licked but refused to stay that way, for Luckman spiraled two passes to Keane, the first good for thirty-four yards, the second for forty-two and a touchdown.

"Keane's early season trouble was nonchalance," Halas explained, "but he went all out for those pay-off passes." To which Fred Gillies, the dollar-a-year adviser, added something about "the old Bear Spirit."

McAfee had returned to action for a couple of plays in the second Los Angeles game and was employed for most of one quarter in a 42-to-6 rout of the tail-end Lions on November 25, scoring one touchdown on a pass and setting up another by intercepting a pass.

That Lion victory clinched for the Bears their eighth sectional championship, but there remained the tough return match with the improved young Cardinals and the title playoff with the Giants in New York. As they drew nearer, Halas' thoughts turned toward staid old Harvard. Halas, of course, attended Illinois, but he knew John Harvard had a halfback who could help him. That halfback was Henry "Bob" Margarita.

Margarita had played with the Bears in 1944–45 while Halas was in service, but although he had never seen Bob play, Halas knew all about him. He had heard Hunk Anderson term him a back "perfectly qualified to work from the T formation." Bob was the leading Bear ball carrier both years, the work-horse type of back a coach loves and a top defensive man for good measure.

Halas had released him that fall to accept a position as backfield coach at Harvard. Everyone else wrote Bob off then as a lost Bear. But not Halas. The day after the Harvard season ended, he called Cambridge on the telephone and asked Margarita if he'd like to finish the year with the Bears. Bob was so delighted he was speechless for a moment, then held a brief conversation with his wife, a niece of Connie Mack, baseball's grand old man.

"Yes!" he almost shouted. The next morning he was on a Chicago-bound train and on Tuesday was in uniform working out with the Bears. Then in the Cardinal game he sprained an ankle so badly he was able to play only a few minutes of the championship game.

"It was worth it," says Halas. "Jim Conzelman and Phil Handler remembered Margarita so well that his return actually forced them to change their plans!" And Handler admitted he was more frightened of Margarita than of McAfee or Luckman.

The Cardinals won the ball game, 35 to 28, as a record crowd of 47,511 whooped in excitement, but there's no telling what might have happened if Margarita had not been

injured. Even as things were, almost everything happened.

The Bears, losing 28 to 14 with four minutes to play, rallied to tie the score at 28 all with one minute remaining. All they had to do to preserve a tie game was to make a long kickoff and hold the Cards for a play or two. But the Bears weren't satisfied with a tie. They wanted to win. "We don't play for ties," says Halas. So "Monk" Maznicki attempted an onside kick.

The Bears were off side in their eagerness, so he kicked again. This time the ball dribbled to the Bear forty-nine yard line, where a mass of Bears and Cardinals quickly were piled. From the bottom of the heap emerged Maznicki to hand the ball to referee Bill Downes, who motioned a first down, but even as he did so, up rushed another official crying, "He stole the ball. It's the Cardinals' ball."

Maznicki, normally an even-tempered fellow, squawked so violently the Bears were penalized fifteen yards for unsportsmanlike conduct, the assessment giving the Cardinals first down on the Bear thirty-four. Two quick passes from Paul Christman to Mal Kutner, and the Cards had won in the daffiest finish Chicago football fans had seen in years.

The championship play-off with the Giants was a record smasher in many ways, with a crowd of 58,346 and each Bear drawing down a check for $1,975.82 as his share of the spoils in a 24-to-14 victory, but with the whole affair lacking in natural thrills because on the night before the game it was revealed two Giants had been approached by gamblers with a proposition to throw the game. President Bert Bell barred one of the Giants, halfback Merle Hapes, from the game, pending further investigation, but permitted the other, Frank Filchock, to play.

Regardless of what he may have told the gamblers and investigators, Filchock was half the Giant football team that afternoon. Indeed, the entire team, fighting valiantly to disprove any charges of dishonesty, played superb football. But it wasn't enough.

The Bears scored first in less than five minutes on a twenty-one-yard pass from Luckman to Kavanaugh. A bit later, Filchock, his nose broken, tried to pass just as he was hit hard by Pat Preston. The pass wobbled crazily into the arms of Dante Magnani, who ran thirty-nine yards for another touchdown.

Frank Liebel took a thirty-eight-yard pass from Filchock on the goal line for a Giant touchdown late in the second period, and in the third Filchock passed to Steve Filipowicz for five yards and the tying score, Ken Strong matching Maznicki's conversion after each touchdown. Then, as you already know, Luckman pulled old "Ninety-seven bingo, keep it" out of the hat for his only touchdown of the year and the most important one. Maznicki added a field goal later for good measure.

On the evening before the Bears were to go into a non-league charity game against the Eagles in Philadelphia in early September, Halas was talking with Commissioner Bell's two sons, Bert and Upton, who were having their picture taken with Luckman.

"Who are you rooting for?" he asked.

"The Eagles," came the simultaneous response from the two boys, who live in a Philadelphia suburb.

"Why," countered Halas, "you two are good luck for the Bears. You root for us, and I'll see that you get gold footballs if we win the championship."

On Sunday night, December 15, Halas received a telegram. It was from Philadelphia. It read: "Don't forget the gold footballs!" He didn't.

A check of the Bears' attendance figures for 1946 reveals that they played before a total of 754,546 people in seventeen games for an average of 44,385.

Today, George Halas' dream, started by Zuppke back in '17, is a dream no longer. He knows now that as surely as there are gold footballs there is gold in football.

APPENDIX

PAST STANDINGS

1921

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Chicago Bears *	10	1	1	.909
Buffalo	9	1	2	.900
Akron	7	2	1	.778
Green Bay	6	2	2	.750
Canton	4	3	3	.571
Dayton	4	3	1	.571
Rock Island	5	4	1	.556
Chicago Cardinals	2	3	2	.400
Cleveland	2	6	0	.250
Rochester	2	6	0	.250
Detroit	1	7	1	.125
Columbus				.000
Cincinnati				.000

* Staleys.

1922

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Canton	10	0	2	1.000
Bears	9	3	0	.750
Cardinals	8	3	0	.727
Toledo	5	2	2	.714
Rock Island	4	2	1	.667
Dayton	4	3	3	.571
Green Bay	4	3	3	.571
Racine	5	4	1	.556
Buffalo	3	4	1	.429
Akron	3	4	2	.429
Milwaukee	2	4	3	.333
Marion	2	6	0	.250
Minneapolis	1	3	0	.250
Rochester				.000
Hammond				.000
Columbus				.000
Louisville				.000
Evansville				.000

1923

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Canton	11	0	1	1.000
Bears	9	2	1	.818
Green Bay	7	2	1	.777
Milwaukee	7	2	3	.777
Cleveland	3	1	3	.750
Cardinals	8	4	0	.667
Duluth	4	3	0	.571
Columbus	5	4	1	.556
Buffalo	5	4	3	.556
Racine	4	4	2	.500
Toledo	2	3	2	.400
Rock Island	2	5	3	.286
Minneapolis	2	5	2	.286
St. Louis	1	4	2	.200
Hammond	1	5	1	.167
Dayton	1	6	1	.143
Akron	1	6	0	.143
Louisville				.000
Rochester				.000
Oorang Indians				.000

1924

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Cleveland	7	1	1	.875
Bears	6	1	4	.856
Frankford	11	2	1	.846
Duluth	5	1	0	.831
Rock Island	6	2	2	.750
Green Bay	7	4	0	.636
Buffalo	6	4	0	.600
Racine	4	3	3	.571
Cardinals	5	4	1	.556
Columbus	4	4	0	.500
Hammond	2	2	1	.500
Milwaukee	5	8	0	.385

1924 (continued)

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Akron	2	6	0	.250
Kansas City	2	7	0	.222
Dayton	2	7	0	.222
Kenosha				.000
Minneapolis				.000
Rochester				.000

1925

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Cardinals	11	2	1	.846
Pottsville	10	2	0	.833
Detroit	8	2	2	.800
New York	8	4	0	.667
Akron	4	2	2	.667
Bears	9	5	3	.643
Frankford	12	7	0	.632
Rock Island	5	3	3	.625
Green Bay	8	5	0	.615
Providence	6	5	1	.545
Canton	4	4	0	.500
Cleveland	5	7	1	.417
Hammond	1	3	0	.250
Kansas City	2	5	1	.228
Buffalo	1	6	2	.147
Duluth				.000
Rochester				.000
Milwaukee				.000
Dayton				.000
Columbus				.000

1926

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Frankford	14	1	1	.933
Bears	12	1	3	.923
Pottsville	10	2	1	.833
Kansas City	8	3	0	.727
Green Bay	7	3	3	.700
Los Angeles	6	3	1	.667
New York	8	4	0	.667
Duluth	6	5	2	.545
Buffalo	4	4	2	.500
Cardinals	5	6	1	.455
Providence	5	7	0	.417
Detroit	4	6	2	.400
Hartford	3	7	0	.300

1926 (continued)

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Brooklyn	3	8	0	.273
Milwaukee	2	7	0	.222
Dayton	1	4	1	.200
Akron	1	4	3	.200
Racine	1	4	0	.200
Columbus	1	6	0	.144
Canton	1	9	3	.100
Louisville				.000
Hammond				.000

1927

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
N. Y. Giants	11	1	1	.917
Green Bay	7	2	1	.778
Bears	9	3	2	.750
Cleveland	8	4	1	.667
Providence	8	5	1	.615
N. Y. Yankees	7	8	1	.467
Frankford	6	9	3	.400
Pottsville	5	8	0	.385
Cardinals	3	7	1	.300
Dayton	1	6	1	.143
Duluth	1	8	0	.111
Buffalo	0	5	0	.000

1928

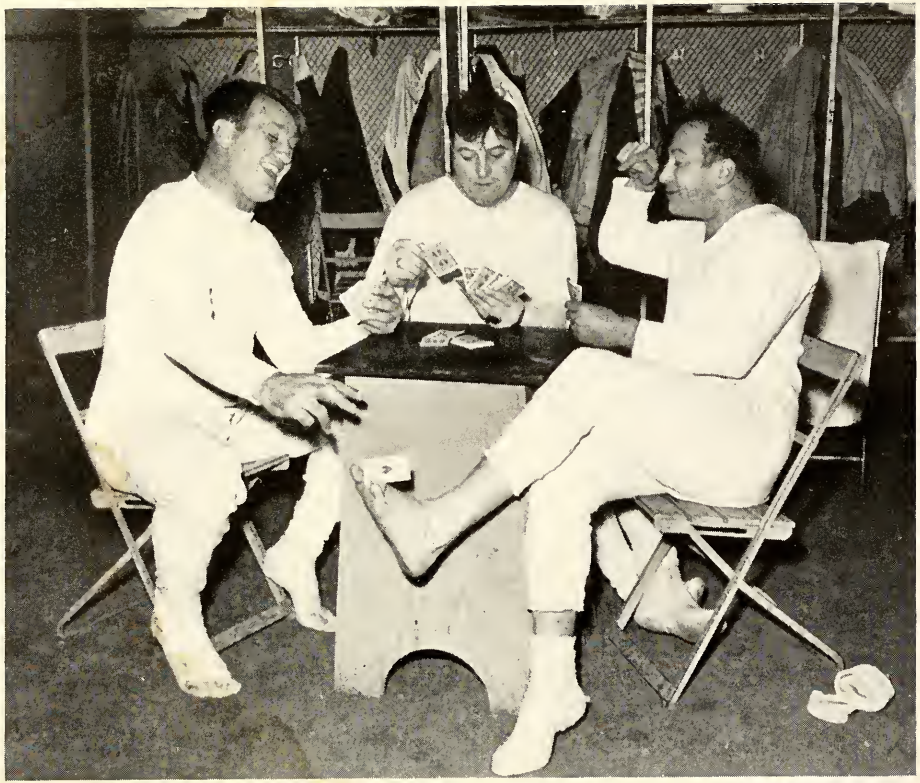
	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Providence	8	1	2	.888
Frankford	11	3	2	.846
Detroit	7	2	1	.778
Green Bay	6	4	3	.600
Bears	7	5	1	.583
N. Y. Giants	4	7	2	.364
N. Y. Yankees	4	8	1	.333
Pottsville	2	8	0	.200
Cardinals	1	5	0	.167
Dayton	0	7	0	.000

1929

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Green Bay	12	0	1	1.000
New York	12	1	1	.923
Frankford	9	4	5	.692
Cardinals	6	6	1	.500
Boston	4	4	0	.500

THE BEARS' WARTIME COACHES

Heartley "Hunk" Anderson, John L. "Paddy" Driscoll, and Luke Johnsos, who coached the big bad Bears during the years "Papa Bear" was in the Navy.



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THE THREE BEARS

Bronko Nagurski, George Musso, and Bob Snyder put their cards on (and under) the table before the 1943 championship play-off game.

1929 (continued)

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Stapleton	3	4	3	.429
Orange	3	4	4	.429
Providence	4	6	2	.400
Bears	4	8	2	.333
Buffalo	1	7	1	.125
Minneapolis	1	9	0	.100
Dayton	0	6	0	.000

1930

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Green Bay	11	3	1	.786
New York	13	4	0	.765
Bears	9	4	1	.692
Brooklyn	7	4	1	.636
Providence	6	4	1	.600
Stapleton	5	5	2	.500
Cardinals	5	6	2	.455
Portsmouth	5	6	3	.455
Frankford	4	14	1	.235
Minneapolis	1	7	1	.125
Newark	1	10	1	.091

1931

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Green Bay	12	2	0	.857
Portsmouth	11	3	0	.786
Bears	8	4	0	.667
Cardinals	5	4	0	.556
New York	6	6	1	.500
Providence	4	4	3	.500
Stapleton	4	6	1	.400
Cleveland	2	8	0	.200
Brooklyn	2	12	0	.143
Frankford	1	6	1	.143

1932

	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears	7	1	6	.875
Green Bay	10	3	1	.767
Portsmouth	6	2	4	.750
Boston	4	4	2	.500
New York	4	6	2	.400
Brooklyn	3	9	0	.250
Cardinals	2	6	2	.250
Stapleton	2	7	3	.222

1933

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears	10	2	1	.833
Portsmouth	6	5	0	.545
Green Bay	5	7	1	.418
Cincinnati	3	6	1	.333
Cardinals	1	9	1	.100
EASTERN DIVISION				
New York	11	3	0	.786
Brooklyn	5	4	1	.556
Boston	5	5	2	.500
Philadelphia	3	5	1	.375
Pittsburgh	3	6	2	.333

Bears defeated New York, 23 to 21.

1934

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
New York	8	5	0	.615
Boston	6	6	0	.500
Brooklyn	4	7	0	.364
Philadelphia	4	7	0	.364
Pittsburgh	2	10	0	.166
WESTERN DIVISION				
Bears	13	0	0	1.000
Detroit	10	3	0	.769
Green Bay	7	6	0	.538
Cardinals	5	6	0	.454
St. Louis	1	10	0	.090

New York defeated Bears, 30 to 13.

1935

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Detroit	7	3	2	.700
Green Bay	8	4	0	.666
Cardinals	6	4	2	.600
Bears	6	4	2	.600
EASTERN DIVISION				
New York	9	3	0	.750
Brooklyn	5	6	1	.454
Pittsburgh	4	8	0	.333
* Boston	2	8	1	.200
* Philadelphia	2	9	0	.181

Detroit defeated New York, 26 to 7.

* One game canceled.

1936

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Green Bay	10	1	1	.909
Bears	9	3	0	.750
Detroit	8	4	0	.666
Cardinals	3	8	1	.273
EASTERN DIVISION				
Boston	7	5	0	.714
Pittsburgh	6	6	0	.500
New York	5	6	1	.455
Brooklyn	3	8	1	.273
Philadelphia	1	11	0	.084

Green Bay defeated Boston, 21 to 6.

1937

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Washington	8	3	0	.727
New York	6	3	2	.667
Pittsburgh	4	7	0	.364
Brooklyn	3	7	1	.300
Philadelphia	2	8	1	.200
WESTERN DIVISION				
Bears	9	1	1	.900
Green Bay	7	4	0	.636
Detroit	7	4	0	.636
Cardinals	5	5	1	.500
Cleveland	1	10	0	.091

Washington defeated Bears, 28 to 21.

1938

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
New York	8	2	1	.800
Washington	6	3	2	.666
Brooklyn	4	4	3	.500
Philadelphia	5	6	0	.455
Pittsburgh	2	9	0	.182
WESTERN DIVISION				
Green Bay	8	3	0	.727
Detroit	7	4	0	.636
Bears	6	5	0	.545
Cleveland	4	7	0	.364
Cardinals	2	9	0	.182

New York defeated Green Bay, 23 to 17.

1939

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
New York	9	1	1	.900
Washington	8	2	1	.800
Brooklyn	4	6	1	.400
Philadelphia	1	9	1	.100
Pittsburgh	1	9	1	.100
WESTERN DIVISION				
Green Bay	9	2	0	.818
Bears	8	3	0	.727
Detroit	6	5	0	.545
Cleveland	5	5	1	.500
Cardinals	1	10	0	.091

Green Bay defeated New York, 27 to 0.

1940

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears	8	3	0	.727
Green Bay	6	4	1	.600
Detroit	5	5	1	.500
Cleveland	4	6	1	.400
Cardinals	2	7	2	.222
EASTERN DIVISION				
Washington	9	2	0	.818
Brooklyn	8	3	0	.727
New York	6	4	1	.600
Pittsburgh	2	7	2	.222
Philadelphia	1	10	0	.100

Bears defeated Washington, 73 to 0.

1941

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears *	10	1	0	.909
Green Bay	10	1	0	.909
Detroit	4	6	1	.400
Cardinals	3	7	1	.300
Cleveland	2	9	0	.182
EASTERN DIVISION				
New York	8	3	0	.727
Brooklyn	7	4	0	.636
Washington	6	5	0	.545
Philadelphia	2	8	1	.200
Pittsburgh	1	9	1	.100

Bears defeated New York 37 to 9.

* Bears defeated Green Bay, 33 to 14, in divisional play-off.

1942

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Washington	10	1	0	.909
Pittsburgh	7	4	0	.636
New York	5	5	1	.500
Brooklyn	3	8	0	.273
Philadelphia	2	9	0	.182
WESTERN DIVISION				
Bears	11	0	0	1.000
Green Bay	8	2	1	.800
Cleveland	5	6	0	.455
Cardinals	3	8	0	.273
Detroit	0	11	0	.000

Washington defeated Bears, 14 to 6.

1943

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears	8	1	1	.889
Green Bay	7	2	1	.778
Detroit	3	6	1	.333
Cardinals	0	10	0	.000
EASTERN DIVISION				
Washington *	6	3	1	.667
New York	6	3	1	.667
Phil-Pitt	5	4	1	.555
Brooklyn	2	8	0	.200

Bears defeated Washington, 41 to 21.

* Washington defeated New York, 28 to 0, in divisional play-off.

1944

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Green Bay	8	2	0	.800
Bears	6	3	1	.667
Detroit	6	3	1	.667
Cleveland	4	6	0	.400
Card-Pitt	0	10	0	.000

1944 (continued)

EASTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
New York	8	1	1	.889
Philadelphia	7	1	2	.875
Washington	6	3	1	.667
Boston	2	8	0	.200
Brooklyn	0	10	0	.000

Green Bay defeated New York, 14 to 7.

1945

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Cleveland	9	1	0	.900
Detroit	7	3	0	.700
Green Bay	6	4	0	.600
Bears	3	7	0	.300
Cardinals	1	9	0	.100
EASTERN DIVISION				
Washington	8	2	0	.800
Philadelphia	7	3	0	.700
New York	3	6	1	.333
Yanks	3	6	1	.333
Pittsburgh	2	8	0	.200

Cleveland defeated Washington, 15 to 14.

1946

WESTERN DIVISION	W.	L.	T.	PCT.
Bears	8	2	1	.800
Los Angeles	6	4	1	.600
Cardinals	6	5	0	.545
Green Bay	6	5	0	.545
Detroit	1	10	0	.091
EASTERN DIVISION				
New York	7	3	1	.700
Philadelphia	6	5	0	.545
Washington	5	5	1	.500
Pittsburgh	5	5	1	.500
Boston	2	8	1	.200

Bears defeated New York, 24 to 14.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFF RESULTS

1933 (December 17 at Chicago): Chicago Bears, 23; New York, 21.
1934 (December 9 at New York): New York, 30; Chicago Bears, 13.
1935 (December 15 at Detroit): Detroit, 26; New York, 7.

1936 (December 13 at New York): Green Bay, 21; Boston, 6.
1937 (December 12 at Chicago): Washington, 28; Chicago Bears, 21.
1938 (December 11 at New York): New York, 23; Green Bay, 17.
1939 (December 10 at Milwaukee): Green Bay, 27; New York, 0.
1940 (December 8 at Washington): Chicago Bears, 73; Washington, 0.
1941 (December 21 at Chicago): Chicago Bears, 37; New York, 9.
1942 (December 13 at Washington): Washington, 14; Chicago Bears, 6.
1943 (December 26 at Chicago): Chicago Bears, 41; Washington, 18.
1944 (December 17 at New York): Green Bay, 14; New York, 7.
1945 (December 16 at Cleveland): Cleveland, 15; Washington, 14.
1946 (December 15 at New York): Chicago Bears, 24; New York, 14.

TEAM VS. TEAM RECORDS

CHICAGO BEARS VS. CHICAGO CARDINALS

Chicago Bears won thirty-six; Chicago Cardinals won nine; six tied.

1920—Cardinals, 7; Bears, 6
Bears, 10; Cardinals, 0
1921—Cardinals, 0; Bears, 0
1922—Cardinals, 6; Bears, 0
Cardinals, 9; Bears, 0
1923—Bears, 3; Cardinals, 0
1924—Bears, 6; Cardinals, 0
Bears, 21; Cardinals, 0
1925—Bears, 9; Cardinals, 0
Cardinals, 0; Bears, 0
1926—Bears, 16; Cardinals, 0
Cardinals, 0; Bears, 0
1927—Bears, 10; Cardinals, 0
Cardinals, 3; Bears, 0
1928—Bears, 13; Cardinals, 0
Bears, 34; Cardinals, 0
1929—Cardinals, 0; Bears, 0
Cardinals, 40; Bears, 6
1930—Bears, 32; Cardinals, 6
Bears, 6; Cardinals, 0
Bears, 9; Cardinals, 7
1931—Bears, 26; Cardinals, 13
Bears, 18; Cardinals, 7
1932—Cardinals, 0; Bears, 0
Bears, 34; Cardinals, 0
1933—Bears, 12; Cardinals, 9
Bears, 22; Cardinals, 6
1934—Bears, 20; Cardinals, 0
Bears, 17; Cardinals, 6
1935—Cardinals, 7; Bears, 7
Bears, 13; Cardinals, 0
1936—Bears, 7; Cardinals, 3
Cardinals, 14; Bears, 7
1937—Bears, 16; Cardinals, 7
Bears, 42; Cardinals, 28
1938—Bears, 16; Cardinals, 13
Bears, 34; Cardinals, 28
1939—Bears, 44; Cardinals, 7
Bears, 48; Cardinals, 7
1940—Cardinals, 21; Bears, 7
Bears, 31; Cardinals, 23
1941—Bears, 53; Cardinals, 7
Bears, 34; Cardinals, 24
1942—Bears, 41; Cardinals, 14
Bears, 21; Cardinals, 7
1943—Bears, 20; Cardinals, 0
Bears, 35; Cardinals, 24
1945—Cardinals, 16; Bears, 7
Bears, 28; Cardinals, 20
1946—Bears, 34; Cardinals, 17
Cardinals, 35; Bears, 28

Points: Chicago Bears, 903; Chicago Cardinals, 441.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. DETROIT

Chicago Bears won fifteen; Detroit won nine; two tied.

1934—Bears, 19; Detroit, 16
Bears, 10; Detroit, 7
1935—Detroit, 20; Bears, 20
Detroit, 14; Bears, 2
1936—Bears, 12; Detroit, 10
Detroit, 13; Bears 7
1937—Bears, 28; Detroit, 20
Bears, 13; Detroit, 0
1938—Detroit, 13; Bears, 7
Detroit, 14; Bears, 7
1939—Detroit, 10; Bears, 0
Bears, 23; Detroit, 13
1940—Bears, 7; Detroit, 0
Detroit, 17; Bears, 14
1941—Bears, 49; Detroit, 0
Bears, 24; Detroit, 7
1942—Bears, 16; Detroit, 0
Bears, 42; Detroit, 0
1943—Bears, 27; Detroit, 21
Bears, 35; Detroit, 14
1944—Bears, 21; Detroit, 21
Detroit, 41; Bears, 21
1945—Detroit, 16; Bears, 10
Detroit, 35; Bears, 28
1946—Bears, 42; Detroit, 6
Bears, 45; Detroit, 24

Points: Chicago Bears, 529; Detroit, 352.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. PHILADELPHIA

Chicago Bears won nine; Philadelphia won none; one tied.

1933—Philadelphia, 3; Bears, 3
1935—Bears, 39; Philadelphia, 0
1936—Bears, 17; Philadelphia, 0
Bears, 28; Philadelphia, 7
1938—Bears, 28; Philadelphia, 6
1939—Bears, 27; Philadelphia, 14
1941—Bears, 49; Philadelphia, 14
1942—Bears, 45; Philadelphia, 14
1944—Bears, 28; Philadelphia, 7
1946—Bears, 21; Philadelphia, 14

Points: Chicago Bears, 285; Philadelphia, 79.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. GREEN BAY

Chicago Bears won thirty-one; Green Bay won twenty-one; five tied.

1921—Bears, 20; Green Bay, 0
1923—Bears, 3; Green Bay, 0
1924—Green Bay, 5; Bears, 0
Bears, 3; Green Bay, 0
1925—Green Bay, 14; Bears, 10
Bears, 21; Green Bay, 0
1926—Green Bay, 6; Bears, 6
Bears, 19; Green Bay, 13
Green Bay, 3; Bears, 3
1927—Bears, 7; Green Bay, 6
Bears, 14; Green Bay, 6
1928—Green Bay, 12; Bears, 12
Green Bay, 16; Bears, 6
Green Bay, 6; Bears, 0
1929—Green Bay, 23; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 14; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 25; Bears, 0
1930—Green Bay, 7; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 13; Bears, 12
Bears, 21; Green Bay, 0

CHICAGO BEARS VS. GREEN BAY (continued)

1931—Green Bay, 7; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 6; Bears, 2
Bears, 7; Green Bay, 6
1932—Green Bay, 0; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 2; Bears, 0
Bears, 9; Green Bay, 0
1933—Bears, 14; Green Bay, 7
Bears, 10; Green Bay, 7
Bears, 7; Green Bay, 6
1934—Bears, 24; Green Bay, 10
Bears, 27; Green Bay, 14
Bears, 10, Green Bay, 6
1935—Green Bay, 7; Bears, 0
Green Bay, 17; Bears, 14
1936—Bears, 30; Green Bay, 3
Green Bay, 21; Bears, 10
1937—Bears, 14; Green Bay, 2
Green Bay, 24; Bears, 14
1938—Bears, 2; Green Bay, 0
Green Bay, 24; Bears, 17
1939—Green Bay, 21; Bears, 16
Bears, 30; Green Bay, 27
1940—Bears, 41; Green Bay, 10
Bears, 14; Green Bay, 7
1941—Bears, 25; Green Bay, 17
Green Bay, 16; Bears, 14
Bears, 33; Green Bay, 14 *
1942—Bears, 44; Green Bay, 28
Bears, 38; Green Bay, 7
1943—Bears, 21; Green Bay, 21
Bears, 21; Green Bay, 7
1944—Green Bay, 42; Bears, 28
Bears, 21; Green Bay, 0
1945—Green Bay, 31; Bears, 21
Bears, 28; Green Bay, 24
1946—Bears, 30; Green Bay, 7
Bears, 10; Green Bay, 7

* Divisional play-off.

Points: Chicago Bears, 803; Green Bay, 624.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. NEW YORK

Chicago Bears won nineteen; New York won twelve; one tied.

1925—Bears, 19; New York, 7
New York, 9; Bears, 0
1926—Bears, 7; New York, 0
1927—New York, 13; Bears, 7
1928—Bears, 13; New York, 0
1929—New York, 26; Bears, 14
New York, 14; Bears, 9
New York, 34; Bears, 0
1930—New York, 12; Bears, 0
Bears, 12; New York, 0
1931—Bears, 6; New York, 0
Bears, 12; New York, 6
New York, 25; Bears, 6
1932—Bears, 28; New York, 8
Bears, 6; New York, 0
1933—Bears, 14; New York, 10
New York, 3; Bears, 0
Bears, 23; New York, 21 *
1934—Bears, 27; New York, 7
Bears, 10; New York, 9
New York, 30; Bears, 13 *
1935—Bears, 20; New York, 3
New York, 3; Bears, 0
1936—Bears, 25; New York, 7
1937—New York, 3; Bears, 3
1939—New York, 16; Bears, 13
1940—Bears, 37; New York, 21
1941—Bears, 37; New York, 9 *
1942—Bears, 26; New York, 7
1943—Bears, 56; New York, 7
1946—New York, 14; Bears, 0
Bears, 24; New York, 14 *

Points: Chicago Bears, 467; New York, 338.

* Championship play-off game.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. LOS ANGELES

Chicago Bears won one; Los Angeles won none; one tied.

1946—Bears, 28; Los Angeles, 28
Bears, 27; Los Angeles, 21

Points: Chicago Bears, 55; Los Angeles, 49.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. PITTSBURGH

Chicago Bears won eight; Pittsburgh won none; none tied.

1934—Bears, 28; Pittsburgh, 0
1935—Bears, 23; Pittsburgh, 7
1936—Bears, 27; Pittsburgh, 9
Bears, 26; Pittsburgh, 6
1937—Bears, 7; Pittsburgh, 0
1939—Bears, 32; Pittsburgh, 0
1941—Bears, 34; Pittsburgh, 7
1945—Bears, 28; Pittsburgh, 21

Points: Chicago Bears, 205; Pittsburgh, 50.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. WASHINGTON

Chicago Bears won five; Washington won five; none tied.

1937—Washington, 28; Bears, 21 *
1938—Bears, 31; Washington, 7
1940—Washington, 7; Bears, 3
Bears, 73; Washington, 0 *
1941—Bears, 35; Washington, 21
1942—Washington, 14; Bears, 6 *
1943—Washington, 21; Bears, 7
Bears, 41; Washington, 21 *
1945—Washington, 28; Bears, 21
1946—Bears, 24; Washington, 20

Points: Chicago Bears, 262; Washington, 167.

* Championship play-off game.

RECORDS OF MERGERS

CHICAGO BEARS VS. COMBINES

Chicago Bears won three; Combines won none; none tied.

1943—Bears, 48; Phil-Pitt, 21
1944—Bears, 34; Card-Pitt, 7
Bears, 49; Card-Pitt, 7

Points: Chicago Bears, 131; Combines, 35.

DISCONTINUED SERIES

CHICAGO BEARS VS. CLEVELAND

Chicago Bears won eleven; Cleveland won five; none tied.

1937—Bears, 20; Cleveland, 2
Bears, 15; Cleveland, 7
1938—Cleveland, 14; Bears, 7
Cleveland, 23; Bears, 21

CHICAGO BEARS VS. CLEVELAND (continued)

1939—Bears, 30; Cleveland, 21
Bears, 35; Cleveland, 21
1940—Bears, 21; Cleveland, 14
Bears, 47; Cleveland, 25
1941—Bears, 48; Cleveland, 21
Bears, 31; Cleveland, 13
1942—Bears, 21; Cleveland, 7
Bears, 47; Cleveland, 0
1944—Cleveland, 19; Bears, 7
Bears, 28; Cleveland, 21
1945—Cleveland, 17; Bears, 0
Cleveland, 41; Bears, 21

Points: Chicago Bears, 399; Cleveland, 266.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. BOSTON REDSKINS

Chicago Bears won four; Boston Redskins won one; one tied.

1932—Boston, 7; Bears, 7
1933—Bears, 7; Boston, 0
Boston, 10; Bears, 0
1934—Bears, 21; Boston, 0
1935—Bears, 30; Boston, 14
1936—Bears, 26; Boston, 0

Points: Chicago Bears, 91; Boston Redskins, 31.

DISCONTINUED SERIES

CHICAGO BEARS VS. BROOKLYN

Chicago Bears won eleven; Brooklyn won none; one tied.

1929—Brooklyn, 0; Bears, 0
1931—Bears, 26; Brooklyn, 0
1932—Bears, 13; Brooklyn, 0
Bears, 20; Brooklyn, 0
1933—Bears, 10; Brooklyn, 0
1934—Bears, 21; Brooklyn, 7
1935—Bears, 24; Brooklyn, 14
1937—Bears, 29; Brooklyn, 7
1938—Bears, 24; Brooklyn, 6
1940—Bears, 16; Brooklyn, 7
1942—Bears, 35; Brooklyn, 0
1943—Bears, 33; Brooklyn, 21

Points: Chicago Bears, 251; Brooklyn 62.

CHICAGO BEARS VS. PORTSMOUTH

Chicago Bears won five; Portsmouth won two; two tied.

1930—Portsmouth, 7; Bears, 6
Bears, 14; Portsmouth, 6
1931—Bears, 9; Portsmouth, 6
Portsmouth, 3; Bears, 0
1932—Portsmouth, 13; Bears, 13
Portsmouth, 7; Bears, 7
Bears, 9; Portsmouth, 0 *
1933—Bears, 17; Portsmouth, 14
Bears, 17; Portsmouth, 7

Points: Chicago Bears, 92; Portsmouth, 63.

* Championship play-off (played indoors in Chicago Stadium).

Date Due

JUL 16 1953	JUL 24 '53		
[illegible]	AUG 5 '54		
NOV 8 [illegible]	1956 13 1956		
NOV 26 1956	JAN 11 1957		
NOV 9 [illegible]			
APR 14 [illegible]			
MAY 14 '60			

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